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Nick Carter Stories

TEN-ICHI, THE WONDERFUL
OR
NICK CARTER'S GREATEST FIND

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NICK CARTER STORIES

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TEN-ICHI, THE WONDERFUL;

Or, NICK CARTER'S GREATEST FIND.

Edited by CHICKERING CARTER.

CHAPTER I.

THE BURGLARS OF PROTHERO PARK.

The residents of Prothero Park, an aristocratic suburb of New York City, had become completely terrorized, and throughout the contiguous neighborhood including an area of ten miles or more, the conditions were little, if any, better.

One by one the most exclusive and thoroughly guarded homes had been entered and robbed. And, although the most strenuous and effective efforts that could be inaugurated had been employed to abate the evil, not one of the robbers had been arrested, and the bold and seemingly fearless lawbreakers continued their depredations with impunity.

The local police authorities were helpless, dazed, and at their wits' end.

The detective bureau of New York City had been appealed to, but without avail, for Prothero Park was outside the city limits, and therefore beyond the jurisdiction of the metropolitan police.

After that a local vigilance committee was organized, but it accomplished nothing more substantial than to supply an armed guard which patrolled the streets at night, and thus, for a time, accomplished a discontinuance of the robberies.

However, as soon as a feeling of security began to be felt, the vigilance of the guard relaxed, and this was followed by two of the most daring robberies of the season, which took place, so the community averred, under the very noses of the guard.

In this extremity a meeting of the most prominent of the residents of the community was called, and Mr. Angus Cameron, the richest and most influential of them all, presided.

In calling the meeting to order, Mr. Cameron spoke as follows:

"The time has come," he said, "when we must adopt some decisive measures for our own protection. Our mothers, wives, and daughters live in constant terror of what may happen next. It seems to make no difference how thoroughly guarded we are, or how completely armed we may be, the robbers find a way to enter our homes.

"We have appealed to the police force of the city, but it cannot help us.

"We have engaged private detectives by the score, and watchmen to protect us, but the outrages continue.

"We have organized a vigilance committee, and that has proved inadequate.

"We carry arms, but we never have an opportunity to use them, because of the cunning which our enemies constantly display.

"In short, gentlemen, we have adopted every means that I can think of but one, to stop this epidemic of burglary, and now things have arrived at such a pass that you will all agree with me when I say that it must be stopped or we must make up our minds to abandon our homes and return to the city."

"What is the one means that we have not tried?" asked one of his neighbors. "You just now said there was one, but for the life of me I cannot think of any that is likely to prove any more productive of results than those that we have already tried."

"Nick Carter," replied Mr. Cameron briefly.

"By Jove!" exclaimed one man.

"That's so," said another.

"Never thought of him," remarked a third.

"Well, he is here in this house now," continued Mr. Cameron. "At least, there is a person here who says he is

Nick Carter, and inasmuch as he has brought the letter I wrote to the detective, I think we must accept him as being the man I sent for."

"Ask him to come in," came from several of those present, as with one voice, and Mr. Cameron, at whose house the meeting was held, threw open the door which communicated with an adjoining room.

"Now, Mr. Carter," he said, "if you will step this way we will be glad to discuss this matter with you."

For the benefit of the reader, it must be explained here that the person who entered the room where the gentlemen of Prothero Park were waiting to receive him, was not Nick Carter at all. In reality, he was no other than Ten-Ichi, the Japanese assistant of the great detective, who had come to the United States to study under the master mind of Nick Carter, and his presence, in place of Nick Carter, may be explained by a note which the detective had left in his room for him that same morning.

It read as follows:

"TEN-ICHI: This letter from Mr. Agnus Cameron, of Prothero Park, explains itself. I want you to take it to the writer, represent yourself as Nick Carter, accept the case he offers you, and work it out to the end.

"I think you are capable of doing it unaided. If you should find that you need assistance, you will know what to do, but I am very busy on another matter just now, and so don't want you to call upon me unless necessary. You may, in presenting yourself, adopt any disguise you please. N. C."

When Ten-Ichi found the note he repaired at once to the make-up room, and when he presented himself at the house of Angus Cameron he looked and acted the part of a young and vigorous book agent, and in that capacity he had indeed called at several houses in the neighborhood before he at last applied at the Cameron residence.

"Why," exclaimed one of the gentlemen, when Ten-Ichi entered the room where they were seated, "you were at my house not half an hour ago, if I am not very much mistaken, trying to sell me a set of books called the 'Heroes and Heroines of History.'"

"I was, indeed, sir," replied Ten-Ichi, who had adopted a touch of the Irish brogue, for the occasion. "I'll do that yet, sir, if you feel inclined to take them now, but by me soul, whin I was at your house you acted as if you thought I might be one of the burghlar boys thimsilves, by the way you received me."

"That is exactly what I did fear. How are we to know that you are Nick Carter?"

"Maybe you can guess it; it's aisy."

"Have you any means of identifying yourself?"

Ten-Ichi turned to Mr. Cameron.

"Sure, sir," he said, "your friend thinks I want to cash a check."

"I have always supposed that Nick Carter was a less youthful person than you appear to be," said Mr. Cameron, and there was a suspicion of doubt in his voice.

"Right," replied Ten-Ichi. "And if you'll give me five minutes in the next room I'll make you think me as old as Methuselah.

"But that is neither here nor there," continued the young Japanese detective, his voice taking on a businesslike tone. "You have sent for me to request my assistance in connection with the burglaries that have been taking place in this neighborhood. I am here, in reply to your request. The question is, do you want me to take the case?"

"We certainly do; and as for your reward——"

"I'll send in my bill to you for services and expenses after the work is done. My terms are always the same. Now, sir, whose house was robbed last?"

"My own. This one?"

"When?"

"The night before last."

"Ah! But was the report in the papers, to the effect that this was the third visitation of the burglars at your house, correct?"

"Perfectly. It was their third visit here."

"Well, Mr. Cameron, if you don't mind, I'll just ask you a few questions. When this house was robbed the first time, what was stolen?"

"The robbers did not ascend to the second story on that visit," replied Mr. Cameron. "They contented themselves with the silverware in the dining rooms and some ornaments in the parlor. About a thousand dollars' worth of plunder, I think."

"They left no clew?"

"None that we were able to find."

"What about the second time?"

"They contented themselves with my sporting outfit—my guns, fishing rods, reels, et cetera. I lost twenty-five hundred dollars' worth of such things on that visitation."

"And they took nothing else?"

"No; not another thing. Six double-barreled shotguns, two rifles, a quantity of ammunition, my best rods and my most expensive reels."

"It would seem, then, as if they came here expressly for those things, eh?"

"Yes, it would. And also, as if they knew exactly where and how to find them."

"Now, about the night before last?"

"They took thirty-five hundred dollars in cash, two thousand dollars' worth of diamonds that belong to Mrs. Cameron, and a few jewels of less value."

"The newspapers did not mention these losses which you now name."

"No."

"Why?"

"This is the first time I have mentioned the amount of my loss outside my own family."

"And the first time, also, that you have told what it was you lost?"

"Yes."

"Where was the cash and the jewels?"

"In the safe in my library."

"Was the safe blown open?"

"No. It would appear that it was not locked when the burglars entered the house. I think when I closed it the last time I must have neglected to turn the dial to lock it, for when I discovered my loss yesterday morning the door of the safe was swinging wide open."

"I see. It would follow, therefore, either that you forgot to lock the safe before you retired for the night, or that the person who robbed you knew the combination, and was thus able to open it without using force?"

"No, sir; not that. Nobody in the world knew, or knows now, the combination—that is, of course, nobody but myself," Mr. Cameron added.

"Are you positive of that, Mr. Cameron?"

"Assuredly."

"Do you keep a written copy of the combination of the safe anywhere, to refresh your memory in case you should forget it?"

"No. I arranged the combination myself; I did not make a memorandum of it and I have never told it to a human being, so nobody could have known it but myself; so, you see, I must have neglected to lock the safe when I retired that night."

CHAPTER II.

SLICK BURGLARS.

"Will you tell me, Mr. Cameron, how you happened to have such a large amount of cash in your house at the time?"

"A mortgage I had held for some time was paid off during the afternoon of that day."

"In what room of the house were you when the money was paid to you?"

"In my library."

"The room where the safe is located?"

"Yes."

"Where is that room situated?"

"On the second floor of the wing. It is my private library, not the general one, on this floor. I call it my library, to distinguish it from the library, which is used as such by the rest of the household."

"I see. You use it as a sort of office?"

"No. It is my personal retiring room, where I go when I wish to be alone. I smoke there and think there. I do my writing there, and I sit there when I am especially interested in a book I happen to be reading; but I rarely entertain any person there."

"How does it happen, then, that yesterday afternoon you received this particular person who paid off the mortgage, in that room?"

"Because he is a very old friend. We were boys together. We have always been intimate friends—chums, in fact. He is one of three or four persons who are ever admitted there, and he always has free access to me whenever he comes to my house—in fact, he is treated as a member of the family, and he goes about the house with perfect freedom."

"Who are the others?"

"My wife, my son, my daughter, this gentleman here on my right, Mr. Cooper, and Mr. Blaisdell are the only persons I receive in that room."

"Who is Mr. Blaisdell?"

"He is the gentleman who paid me the money, and"—turning toward the others—"I must request all who are present not to mention the circumstance that I held a mortgage on any of his property. In fact, Mr. Carter, Mr. Blaisdell is our minister."

"Ah! I see. Was he in the room when you placed the money in the safe?"

"Certainly."

"He saw you put it there?"

"Naturally."

"Who, beside Mr. Blaisdell and yourself, knew that the money was there, or, in fact, that the money was in your possession at all?"

"Nobody."

"You did not mention the fact that you had received it to anybody? Not even to any of your own family?"

"I did not mention it at all."

"And you and the minister were alone together when you put the money in the safe?"

"We were."

"Now, do you think it possible that he told anybody about the transaction?"

"No, I do not; for the reason that he desired that the entire transaction should remain a secret between us. The mortgage was on property in another county, and I am sure that the fact I had advanced money to him had never been told to anybody."

"Then, so far as you know, you and Mr. Blaisdell are the only persons who had any knowledge that the money was there?"

"Yes."

"You say you think you must have forgotten to lock the safe before retiring?"

"Yes."

"As a matter of fact, do you think you did lock it?"

"I have never before neglected to turn the dial, and so lock it," said Mr. Cameron, with an air of conviction.

"If you were under oath, on the witness stand," persisted the young detective, "would you be willing to swear that you did not lock the safe before you retired, night before last?"

"No, I would not."

Ten-Ichi permitted his eyes to travel slowly from one to another of the occupants of the room until he had taken in each one there, and then:

"How many of you gentlemen have been robbed?" he asked.

"There are five present beside myself," said Cameron, speaking for the others, "and every one of them has been visited by the burglars."

"Were you robbed, Mr. Cooper?" asked Ten-Ichi, of that gentleman.

"Yes, I am one of the victims," and Mr. Cooper smiled rather sadly.

"When was your home entered?" asked Ten-Ichi.

"Two weeks ago."

"What was stolen?"

"Almost everything the rascals could lay their hands on; decorative furnishings mostly, I think—rugs, sofa pillows, cushions, pictures on the walls, bric-a-brac, silverware, a case of wine and a case of whisky from the cellar, several boxes of cigars, a lot of pipes I have been collecting for years, and some smaller articles, too numerous to mention."

"And you, sir?" asked Ten-Ichi, addressing the man next to Cooper.

"I think, Mr. Carter, that your replies to these questions will be about the same from each of the gentlemen present," interrupted Cameron, "and if you will permit I believe I can give you a general answer which will cover all the cases in hand."

"Very well, sir."

"We have thought that the burglars have developed almost a regular system in the conduct of their robberies, not only in this community, but in the neighborhoods adjacent to Prothero Park.

"In other words, to those who have observed closely, it has appeared as if the robbers had made up their minds, before entering a house, exactly what they would take from it, and this view of the case seems to be borne out by the facts."

"Will you be a little more explicit?"

"Well, for example, when Cooper's house was visited, he was impressed, and so was I, with the idea that the thieves were after house furnishings and nothing else. There were other things of even greater value within reach of their hands that they might have taken at that time, had they been so disposed.

"In the case of the robbery of Mr. Small this view of the case was especially emphasized."

"How so?"

"Why, they carried away nothing but mattresses and bedding, pillows, blankets, and such things.

"Mr. Small's house was unoccupied at the time. His family was out of town and he was taking his meals and sleeping in the city; and they might have cleaned it out of everything it contained."

"Then, Mr. Cameron, your opinion is that the thieves have in each case decided what they wanted before they entered the selected house, that they have in each case made straight for the selected objects, and having obtained them, they were satisfied?"

"Yes; that is it."

"If we carry out that hypothesis we must conclude then that they knew about the cash and jewels in the safe, in your private library."

"It would really seem so."

"I think we may pass from that point of the investigation for the present. I have noticed that you have not mentioned the methods which the burglars—I guess it is a safe deduction that there are more than one of them—have used in entering the houses."

"No, sir, I have not."

"It has been my experience in listening to people who related incidents connected with burglarized houses, that they inevitably describe the method by which the house was entered, before detailing any other part of the story. There has been a singular omission of facts of this kind here. Will you tell me why you have neglected to inform me how the burglars entered the various houses?"

"Because, sir, in each case, entrance has been made through a door or a window which some member of the family seems, in each case, to have neglected to fasten before retiring."

"Ah! I see. In other words, it would appear almost as if there was a confederate inside the house?"

"Precisely that; only that we have investigated, and we are each fully assured that such a hypothesis is simply impossible."

"Why?"

"We are each assured of the honesty of our servants. Where there has been one in the employ of any one of us who has not been known to be worthy of confidence, that one has been sent away. It seems useless to go into the details of this aspect of the case, for in——"

Mr. Cameron paused, hesitated, bit his lips, and then continued:

"This is what I was about to say: Take the robbery that occurred in this house night before last."

"Very well. I was about to return to that."

"I have, or rather had, dismissed every servant who has not been in my employ for years, and those who remain enjoy my confidence to the extent of members of the family."

"Well?"

"There is not one of them who has not been tried and trusted for years."

"Very good. Well?"

"Since these roberies have been going on there has not been a night when I have not personally inspected the door and windows myself before retiring. Night before last I remember that I was especially particular in this respect, because I had that sum of money in the house, and I wished to be sure and take every possible precaution against its being stolen.

"And also, for that reason, you were especially particular to lock your safe, were you not?"

"Yes; I think I was."

"In fact, Mr. Cameron, you are positive in your own mind that you did lock the safe that night."

"Yes, I am."

"What more were you about to say?"

"This: That although I personally inspected every door and window of the house before I went to bed, and remember particularly of putting up the chain and shooting the bolt of that door there"—and he pointed toward a side door that connected the room in which they were seated with a porch at the side of the house—"although I remember distinctly that I paid the same strict attention to that door, it was wide open when I came down in the morning. The bolts had been drawn, the chain removed, and the lock turned.

"You see, sir, that such things could only have been done from the inside. Throughout this entire epidemic of robbery there has not been a house entered save by precisely the same methods. We are the victims of burglars who are the most expert in the world.

"When they commit their depredations, doors open for them as if by magic, dogs refuse to bark and so give warning, residents of houses are never disturbed in their slumbers and the utmost vigilance fails to reveal a sign of strangers in the neighborhood.

"The fact is, sir, we are frightened as well as puzzled, for there is something suggestive of the supernatural in these mysterious visitations."

CHAPTER III.

THE DUPLICATE KEYS.

"How many servants have you in your employ, Mr. Cameron?" asked Ten-Ichi.

"Three in the house, two in the stable."

"You say they have all been with you for some time, and that you thoroughly trust them?"

"I have reason to have perfect trust in all of them."

"And your family consists of yourself, your wife, your son, and daughter, I believe. Are there others beside those I have mentioned?"

"No. That is all."

"Where is your son now?"

"In his room, I believe."

"How old is he?"

"Twenty."

"Won't you call him here? Young men usually have ideas which fathers do not credit with their full value, and I would like to talk with him. It is very possible that he can suggest something which will lead to a valuable clew?"

"Yes, I will call him if you wish it, but I would like to remind you that he has not been told of my loss in cash," answered Mr. Cameron readily. "He only knows

that the burglars were here, that they succeeded in opening the safe, and that his mother's jewels have been stolen."

"Then we, who are present in this room, are the only persons who are aware of the cash loss "

"Yes."

"Very good. Now may I bind you and all to secrecy on that point? Good. And now, sir, will you call your son?"

Roger Cameron was as fine a specimen of the athletic young man as one would wish to see. He entered the room with that energetic dash which belongs exclusively to the confidence of healthy youth, and when Ten-Ichi was introduced as Nick Carter, and Roger was told that the great detective had been requested to make an effort to capture the burglars who were despoiling the neighborhood, the young man looked the contempt he felt for the personal appearance of the man whom he supposed to be the great detective.

The reader must remember that Ten-Ichi had eliminated from his appearance every outward evidence that he was a Japanese, and that his appearance could not have been up to the standard which a young man of the proclivities of Roger Cameron would have expected, since he presented nothing more engaging than an itinerant book agent.

Nevertheless, he was visibly pleased when Ten-Ichi singled him out for particular attention.

"I asked your father to call you to this conference, in order to get your personal opinion of these robberies," said Ten-Ichi. "You have one, of course?"

"Certainly."

"Would you mind telling me what it is?"

"I think the robberies are the result of a conspiracy among the servants. I think they have a regularly organized gang among themselves, and that they plan beforehand just what they are to do.

"I feel confident that they have a leader with a rod of iron, and who is, perhaps, not himself a servant, and I think that they must have a headquarters somewhere not very far from here, where they hold their meetings, conceal their plunder, and plan what they are to do in the future."

"I perceive that you have given considerable thought to this subject," said Ten-Ichi.

"I have, of course."

"Have you a theory about their methods of entering this house night before last?"

"Certainly."

"What is it?"

"I think that one of my father's servants admitted them."

"Which one?"

"I haven't gone so far as that yet."

"What do you think about the opening of the safe in your father's room?"

"That he failed to lock it. That he perhaps believed he locked it, but that in reality he did not."

Ten-Ichi turned to Mr. Cameron.

"Will you permit your son to go with me alone to the room where the safe is located?" he asked. "You have made the mistake of not questioning your son, and I find that he has some excellent and original ideas on this subject. If you and the others will wait here till we return, we won't be long."

"Certainly. Go ahead," said Mr. Cameron.

Roger Cameron was visibly pleased by the compliment paid him by the detective, and with no hesitation turned and led the way from the room.

The private library of Mr. Cameron, in which the safe was located, was nothing more than a small room on the second floor in the wing of the house.

The safe, about the size of an ordinary trunk when stood on end, occupied one corner of the room, and was closed.

Ten-Ichi crossed to it and endeavored to turn the handle, but discovered that it was locked.

"Too bad," he said. "I wish you would go back and ask your father to give you the combination. I would like to look inside the safe. He will have no objection to giving it to you now, I think."

Roger acquiesced and left the room immediately, but no sooner was he out of the room than Ten-Ichi turned the handle of the door and opened the safe without difficulty. It had not been locked at all. Ten-Ichi had only pretended that it had been.

A hasty survey of the interior developed to Ten-Ichi's searching eyes, merely some bundles of papers systematically arranged inside, and also a bunch of four small keys that dangled from one of the inside drawers, into the lock of which one of the keys had been inserted.

Hastily removing these, after locking the drawer from which they were pendant, Ten-Ichi dropped the keys in his pocket and then quickly but quietly closed the door of the safe and turned the dial so that it was now locked.

Then he crossed to the window and stood looking out into the gathering darkness until Roger Cameron returned to the room.

As Ten-Ichi had expected, Roger's father returned with him.

"The safe is not locked," Mr. Cameron said, upon entering the room.

Without waiting for a reply he went immediately to the safe and tried to open it, but, of course, it would not yield to his touch.

"That is very strange," he remarked. "I was here not half an hour ago, and I am sure I did not lock the safe. It has not been locked since the robbery."

"But it really is locked now," said Ten-Ichi.

"So it seems. However, I am positive I did not lock it."

"Then who did?"

"That I cannot say. Have you been in this room since I left it, Roger?"

"Yes, sir. I was here when you called me."

"Did you touch the dial of the safe "

"Not consciously, sir. I think, however, that I did brush against it. It is possible that it might have been turned in that way sufficiently to lock it."

"Yes," assented his father. "That must be the explanation. What were you doing here, my son?"

"I simply came in search of you, sir."

"Then you were here only a moment?"

With a sigh of relief, doubtless because of the easy and natural explanation of the mystery, Roger Cameron's father drew a chair to the safe and began to turn the dial until finally the tumblers fell into place and he pulled the door open.

For a moment he stared inside the safe, and then, in a voice that trembled with emotion, he exclaimed:

"What surprises you?" asked Ten-Ichi calmly.

"Oh, nothing—nothing at all. For a moment I was under the impression that I had left my keys hanging in that drawer, but now I remember that I—er—dropped them in the pocket of my jacket. Yes, I remember it now perfectly."

Ten-Ichi smiled.

He had been a close observer of all that was taking place while Mr. Cameron was working the combination of the safe, and there were several apparently insignificant details of the scene that had not escaped his vigilant attention.

He believed, also, that he understood why Mr. Cameron had chosen to lie about the keys, for that he had deliberately lied about them could not be denied; and yet, when he rose from the chair in front of the safe, he crossed the room, and, taking a smoking jacket from a chair where it had been carelessly thrown, drew from one of the side pockets a bunch of keys that were exactly like those which Ten-Ichi had taken from the little drawer in the safe.

"Yes, here they are," Mr. Cameron said, apparently very much relieved.

But there was one other incident that had attracted the attentions of the young detective when Mr. Cameron mentioned the keys.

It was nothing more than a quick and almost imperceptible start on the part of Roger, and a hasty motion made by one of his hands toward a pocket in his trousers—a motion that was suspended before it was half consummated; but it was full of significance, for all that.

Ten-Ichi, who permitted nothing to escape him, saw in that arrested motion, together with the incident of the mislaid keys, an explanation of a very puzzling circumstance, and the thought which flashed through his mind on the instant was this:

"All keys of the small, thin pattern are made in duplicate.

"When a man purchases a safe, two keys to each drawer within, are given to him; one of these he puts carefully away for use in case the other is lost, and as such keys are rarely lost, the duplicate is usually forgotten.

"Now here is the point:

"Roger Cameron has found his father's duplicate keys, and has had them in his possession until the moment when his father called him, while he was in this room, at this safe.

"In his haste to reply to his father's summons, he forgot the keys, and he did not remember that he had done so until his father believed he missed his own and so called attention to the fact.

"Roger Cameron was unquestionably at this safe when his father called him, and he believes that he inadvertently turned the dial and locked it.

"He has been at the safe twice this evening, and the keys have been hanging in the drawer since he was there the first time.

"His father saw them there and believed they were his own, which accounts for his thinking they had disappeared when he first opened the safe.

"What was there in connection with this safe that could have induced young Cameron to go to it twice this evening, when it is supposed to be empty of all valuable material? Why did he use his duplicate keys on the drawers, I wonder? Was it to take something from them, or to replace something that had been taken?

"And what will the young man do now when he discovers that his keys are lost?

"His ready theory about the robberies as delivered downstairs was altogether too glib. He had rehearsed it too thoroughly and learned it too well.

"With all your bright looks, Roger Cameron, you are a degenerate, and if you are not the commander in chief of this gang of robbers, you are a member of it."

Ten-Ichi had watched Mr. Cameron narrowly while he worked the combination of the safe, and in doing so had discovered that it was not a difficult matter to read the combination over his shoulder while he was engaged in making it.

Roger might have done it easily a hundred times without his father once having a suspicion of the fact.

His ownership of the duplicate keys now reposing in the pocket of Ten-Ichi, proved that he knew the combination, and with that much established it was a simple matter to explain the other mysteries connected with the robbery.

But it was not such an easy matter to prove it.

Ten-Ichi was already satisfied that he could explain the entire series of burglaries.

It was plain to him that the sons of the very men who had been robbed were the robbers. It was also clear that they had a regularly organized gang, and that having become bolder by reason of their successes, they had branched out and were now extending their activities in every direction.

"There is only one thing for me to do," was Ten-Ichi's thought, "and that is to become a member of their organization. It is the only way in which the proof can be brought home to their fathers, and it is the only way by which these youngsters can be saved from careers of crime. It is worth the time and I will do it."

CHAPTER IV.

PICKING UP THE SCENT.

It was after ten o'clock in the evening when Ten-Ichi took leave of his host; and when he did so, Roger, the son, followed them out upon the wide veranda to bid him good-by, with the ostensible purpose of indicating to him the shortest route to the station, and while they were standing together one of those little things which very often determine important events happened.

Another young man, of about the same age as Roger, was passing the gate, and while he saluted them after the manner of neighbors generally, he also uttered a short whistle, which, while it might have passed unnoticed to most persons, seemed to be weighted with peculiar significance for Roger Cameron, for he threw back his head with a quick motion which suggested defiance more than anything else, whistled the same peculiar cadence in reply, and then, with a sudden assumption of a courtesy that he had not before extended, he offered to accompany the man whom he supposed to be Nick Carter to the station.

"Wait," he exclaimed. "I will get my hat and go with you to the station. Then you will be sure not to miss your way in the dark. The best of directions, particularly in the country, are apt to be very confusing, you know."

Without pausing for a reply, he darted into the house, presently returning equipped for the street, and in another moment Ten-Ichi was walking beside him toward the station.

The young man with whom the signal had been exchanged was presently overtaken, as Ten-Ichi expected he would be.

He had loitered along the street only a short distance

ahead of them, and it was plain to the young detective that he had expected to be followed.

The signal, then, as Ten-Ichi understood it, had meant that he had something to say to Roger, and that he wished to see him without delay.

When Ten-Ichi discovered that an introduction was inevitable, he had a sudden inspiration, which was to make Roger think that he was anxious to keep his identity a secret.

Such an idea he knew would give zest to the meeting of the boys and render it more than ever necessary that they should see and converse with each other secretly.

"Introduce me by any name you please," said Ten-Ichi, quickly, and in a low tone, "but do not mention the fact that I am a detective.

"It is always just as well to keep such matters quiet, you know. The fewer the people in this neighborhood who are made aware of the fact that Nick Carter's services have been engaged, the better."

When they overtook Roger's friend, the latter was introduced to Ten-Ichi as Mr. Hugh Danforth.

Watching the two narrowly while they continued their walk toward the station, it soon became evident to Ten-Ichi that they were exchanging signals, as if each had important information which he wished to impart to the other as soon as opportunity could offier, and the young detective decided that such an opportunity should be vouchsafed them without delay; and, moreover, if it were possible, that he should himself be a witness to that interview.

The train was already pulling in at the station when they arrived, and Ten-Ichi, having announced that he was already provided with a ticket, shook hands cordially with his companions, and leaped upon the platform of the smoking car before the train had been brought to a stop.

In that way he was carried the entire length of the station before the train came to a halt, and so was quickly separated from them.

He did not, however, enter the smoking car, but turned into the one behind it, and, walking rapidly through that and the next one to it, was able to see that neither of the boys gave any further attention to him.

Evidently it did not occur to either of them that the detective had no idea whatever of remaining on the train until it landed him in the city of New York.

In point of fact, it had not once been the intention of Ten-Ichi to return to the city that night. He had undertaken the pilgrimage to Prothero Park, prepared to remain there until the mystery surroundinfg the burglaries was solved, and he had thoroughly provided himself with the wherewithal to meet any emergency that might arise, as well as to perform such tricks of jugglery and disguise as he might need to do before his return.

As soon as he noticed that the boys were already turning away from the station, evidently satisfied that the detective was disposed of for the night, he dropped quietly and quickly from the train, on the opposite side to them, ran along that side to the rear, and so darted out upon the street and across to the opposite side of it, before they left the station platform.

A picket fence, with a dense hedge of box growing luxuriantly behind it, bordered the walk opposite the station, and in an instant Ten-Ichi concealed himself behind it.

Then, with a quickness of motion that would have done credit to Nick Carter himself, he made rapid alterations in his appearance.

The soft Fedora hat he had worn was folded and concealed in one of his many pockets. The coat and waistcoat, made double for just such uses, were taken off, turned inside out, and donned again. The trousers were subjected to the same operation.

A wig of unkempt black hair took the place of the one he had worn as the book agent, and a rough, much-used cap of the corduroy type was tossed upon the grass beside him preparatory to pulling it down over his eyes when he should have altered the complexion of his face to his satisfaction.

He was not long in performing that duty, and then, having smeared his shoes plentifully with mud, adding a touch of it here and there to his face, shirt front, and cuffs, and having disposed of his collar and tie and put on the cap, he stepped forth from his place of concealment, a perfect representation of a young Savoyard workman. In other words, he looked the young Italian laborer to perfection.

All these changes occupied such a short space of time that they were completed almost as soon as the boys came out upon the street from the station, and when he fell in behind them they were not more than a hunderd feet in advance of him, or just far enough so that he could stroll along in their wake without attracting attention to the fact that they were followed.

But he knew that he could not follow them any considerable distance without being observed, for the reason that the hour was already ten o'clock in the evening, and in that suburban neighborhood the street was almost deserted, and indeed in many of the residences the lights had already been extinguished for the night.

Two things, however, upon which Ten-Ichi rather banked for assistance in what he desired to do were destined to help him.

He was convinced that Roger Cameron had made the courtesy of accompanying him to the train merely an excuse to get out of the house long enough to answer in person the signal whistle of his friend, and that being the case, he would not dare to remain out much longer than the time that would be required for him to walk to the station and return.

If that were true, it was also more than likely that Hugh Danforth had made an errand to the train an excuse for his own temporary absence from his home.

Again, if it were true, as Ten-Ichi had already decided it was, that these boys were members of the gang of burglars that had terrorized the neighborhood, they each had methods for leaving their own houses in the stillness of the night, after the members of their respective families were sleeping.

And yet again, presuming the foregoing hypothesis to be correct, it was natural that they would have many times more confidences to exchange with each other anent the coming of the great Nick Carter upon the scene than they could discuss in the short time consumed in walking from the railway station to their homes.

Hence—and here was the point—it would become of vast importance to them that they should meet again that same night, and more than that, that they should call to that meeting the most important and most influential members of their organization.

In other words, Ten-Ichi believed that there would be

a hasty and a special meeting called for that very night, and through that means the young detective was certain to obtain several important bits of information.

How wisely Ten-Ichi conjectured we will presently discover.

Keeping a safe distance behind them, he pursued them up the street, feeling assured that they would bid each other good night at Cameron's gate as if they had no expectation of meeting again that night; and this they did, exactly as he had expected.

Roger Cameron entered his home and closed the door, and for an instant Ten-Ichi hesitated between watching the Cameron house until he reappeared, or following young Danforth.

He decided, however, on the latter course, and having traversed two more squares and turned down a side street, Ten-Ichi saw the youth presently enter a less pretentious house.

Then, as Ten-Ichi looked around him in the half light, he decided that he could not do better than to wait for the reappearance of Hugh Danforth, and to shadow him to the meeting place of the young outlaws, for the young Japanese dectective felt confident that Danforth and young Cameron were prominent members of the gang who had been the cause of the many burglaries in Prothero Park.

CHAPTER V.

THE BLACK SPECTER OF PROTHERO PARK.

If it had been the privilege of the young detective to have selected a spot in which to conceal himself while he watched and waited, he could not have discovered one that was better adapted to his uses than the grounds which surrounded the cottage house where Hugh Danforth lived.

The house itself was a small affair, and doubtless did not contain more than six rooms, consisting of one regular story with a mansard roof, under which were situated, no doubt, the bedrooms of the inmates. But the grounds were extensive, comprising at least two acres of land.

Everywhere, through the grounds, were flower beds, shrubberies, lilac bushes, et cetera, so that a better place in which to hide and from which to watch could not have been hit upon.

All the same, it is not an easy matter for one person to watch the four sides of a house at once, and Ten-Ichi, of course, had no means of deciding from which side Hugh Danforth would reappear.

For that intelligence he had to rely solely upon his own judgment, and this is how he decided the point.

There was only one lighted room in the house when young Danforth entered it, and that Ten-Ichi decided was the general sitting room, in which the young man's mother was doubtless seated, awaiting his return.

Naturally, the boy would make no effort to leave the house again before midnight, and it occurred to Ten-Ichi to wonder how the others, whose presence was desired at the meeting, were to be notified.

Ten-Ichi, after first taking the precaution to assure himself that he was not observed, crept beneath the window where the light shone forth, and was fortunate enough to discover that a slight misfit in the draping of the curtain that shaded it afforded him an opportunity to observe the interior of the room.

When he peered through the opening it was to discover that there were three persons in the room—a man and a woman, evidently the father and mother of the boy, and Hugh himself.

Hugh was at that moment engaged in lighting a lamp, for the house seemed not to be provided with gas, and Ten-Ichi saw him bid his parents good night and leave the room, closing the door behind him.

It was an easy matter then for the young detective to follow the course of the light through the house, up the stairs and into a room on the second floor in the mansard roof, where it remained, and which was therefore where Hugh slept.

Feeling certain that the young man would make no effort to leave the house before his father and mother were sleeping, Ten-Ichi returned to the opposite side of the house where the parents were, for he had decided that as soon as they had gone to their room he would enter the house himself.

He had not long to wait, for within a few moments of the time he took up his position the light was carried from the room up the stairs and deposited in the room directly over it and almost opposite the one occupied by their son.

The phosphorescent dial of Ten-Ichi's watch showed him that it was already eleven o'clock, and as he knew that at least an hour must elapse before he could make a move, he settled himself comfortably in the depth of some lilac bushes.

Presently the light in the room where the parents slept was extinguished, but Ten-Ichi could see by the reflection against the trees that one was still burning in the room to which the son had repaired; but even while he looked that went out also.

Ten-Ichi waited thirty minutes, and then he did a most remarkable thing. Even Nick Carter, had he been an observer of the scene, would have been puzzled to explain it, for it must be remembered that the young assistant was a Japanese, that he had been trained in his own country, where things are accomplished by different methods than those adopted anywhere else in the world, and that, moreover, the lad was decidedly original himself in everything that he undertook to do.

This is what he did.

He deliberately divested himself of his outer clothing, depositing each garment, as he removed it, in such a position among the bushes as would enable him to put it on his person again in the least possible time.

But it was his appearance, after he had laid them all aside, that presented the surprising part of the scene, for he was arrayed entirely in a solid, black, tight-fitting garment that covered him from his head to his feet.

From the pockets of the coat he had discarded he procured a hood and a pair of gloves of the same hue, and, having adjusted these to his satisfaction, he seemed entirely to have disappeared, as if the darkness had swallowed him completely.

Thus costumed, Ten-Ichi felt that he could defy the world to catch him. If he were in the dark, he could not be seen, and if the darkness were not sufficiently dense to absorb him, there was nothing that he could not do in the shape of running, leaping, or dodging, and he was an expert in all of these accomplishments.

Two more things he did before he left the shelter of the lilacs:

One was to conceal several small pads of thin material beneath the black garment he wore, and if there had been

sufficient light and his features had not been concealed by the black hood, a mischievous smile might have been seen on his face as he did so, for truth to tell, they were nothing less than accessories to his present costume, but were made of material so thin that they occupied no more room about his person, when folded, than so much tissue paper would have done.

Nevertheless, that they were important adjuncts to his operations for the next few hours we shall presently see.

The other thing he did, was to select the small picklock which Nick Carter had instructed him how to use, and with it in his hand, to glide rapidly toward the porch which sheltered the front door of the house.

The small, black figure moved as quickly and as silently as a shadow, and as invisibly.

It is doubtful if a person standing at the gateway, fifty feet from the little stoop and watching for the appearance of a person, could have discovered him, so completely did his figure blend with the surrounding darkness of the night.

Having gained the stoop, he worked silently and rapidly for a moment upon the door, and then he glided back again to the bushes. The picklock was of metal and would gleam through the darkness if a ray of light should fall upon it, and hence Ten-Ichi could not afford to take it into the house with him. But it had already done its work, and he had no more use for it at present.

Having replaced it in a pocket of the garments he had discarded, he returned to the porch again.

Let it be remembered that the young detective was absolutely weaponless.

Having decided, while he waited there among the lilac bushes, upon the course he would pursue for the balance of the night, he adopted it without an instant of hesitation; and the most important factor connected with the character he intended to assume, consisted in the fact that he should carry absolutely nothing in his hands, and that nothing should be strapped to his body to impede his movements.

The little pads of folded, tissuelike material, intended for use later during the night, if everything should take place as he believed it would, occupied no more room than so many veils, such as women wear.

The door, already unlocked with the aid of the little instrument named, yielded readily to his touch, and he stepped inside and closed it so softly behind him that a person standing a distance of three feet from the door could not have heard the slightest sound.

For a moment after that he waited, listening intently, but there was not a sound within the house to denote that his entrance had attracted attention, and he reached out for the balustrade and quickly and silently ascended the stairs to the upper floor.

The plan of the interior of the house was so thoroughly in his mind, deliberated upon during his espionage from the outside, that he had no difficulty in making his way at once to the door of Hugh's room.

As he had expected, not a ray of light emanated from it, but as he listened, he could hear a faint tapping sound—so faint, indeed, that only his quickened senses could detect it; and then the young Jap smiled broadly beneath his black hood he wore over his head and face, for he recognized instantly what caused it.

The sound was made by the relay portion of a telegraphic instrument, and, although Ten-Ichi listened for the letters, and could decipher each one as it was made upon the instrument, they refused to fit together into words, and he knew that the operator was employing a cipher which was not intended for uninterested parties' ears.

In a flash, however, it came to him how the members of the youthful gang of burglars communicated with one another; for what was more simple than that they should have had erected a telegraph wire from house to house while they were boys, and to have used it for years between themselves as a mere plaything, only at last to turn it to this other and infamous use?

By shutting off the sounder so that it would not work, and making use only of the relay, which made a sound so faint that it could not be heard beyond the door of a room in which it was employed, save by a person so interested in hearing as Ten-Ichi was, it became a simple matter for the young men to exchange signals, and keep in touch with each other.

"What a pity it is that I do not understand their cipher," thought Ten-Ichi, "for then I could become as well posted as these other chaps. However, I will know it before the night is over.

"My young friend Hugh is notifying his compatriots to leave their homes and attend an important meeting of the gang to be held at their headquarters this night. That is sure. What could be more important to them than the presence of Nick Carter in their midst?

"Gee!" exclaimed Ten-Ichi; "I wonder how this particular captain, or lieutenant, or whatever he is, would feel if he knew that little Ten-Ichi, whom he believes to be Nick Carter, were listening at his door this very moment? I wonder if he locked this door. Probably not."

Ten-Ichi turned the knob, very slowly; so slowly that even if there had been the possibility of a grating sound within the mechanism of the door, it would have found no opportunity for expression.

Then, with the same deliberate care he pushed the door open, accomplishing only the merest fraction of an inch at a time, but, nevertheless, forcing it ajar, after which he stepped across the threshold and closed it as silently as he had opened it.

All this was accomplished without attracting the attention of the young man who was absorbed in sending and receiving messages over the wire, and without his suspecting that there was another person than himself in the room where he was at work.

CHAPTER VI.

HUGH DANFORTH IS SHADOW HAUNTED.

It must be remembered, of course, that the room was in utter darkness.

Hugh Danforth, having decided to leave his home again that night, had not removed his clothing, and was only awaiting the time when he would feel assured that his father and mother were sleeping, when he would slip silently from the house and hurry to the meeting place of his friends and associates.

Also, in order better to understand the incidents which took place there before he did go out, the reader must remember the costume of Ten-Ichi.

Within that room from which all light had been excluded, covered entirely with black, as he was, he could glide from place to place with the utmost ease, in perfect silence, and without the slightest danger of being discovered, so long as he did not once permit himself to

pass between Hugh Danforth and the window; for, notwithstanding the heavy foliage without, a faint glimmer of starlight did sift through it.

On the other hand, by keeping himself in the background and thus placing young Danforth between him and what little light there was at the window, he was enabled to see with some degree of distinctness, without himself being seen; therefore, while he paused near the door after he had closed it, he could quite plainly discern the figure of Danforth, seated at a table near the window, and engaged in manipulating the telegraphic key.

For several moments the young man worked on in silence, save for the faint clicking of the instrument, and then, as if his occupation was completed, he leaned back in his chair, and, following the example of many other young men when they find themselves utterly alone and in the dark, began to think aloud—a practice commonly described by the term, "talking to oneself."

"I've notified everybody but Cooney," he soliloquized, "and Roger said he would find a way to get word to him, so I guess we'll have a full attendance.

"I shouldn't wonder if the boys might decide to make another raid to-night, before daylight. It may be the last chance we will have for a time, for with Nick Carter in the field, we will have to lay low till the present excitement blows over.

"There's Doctor Blaisdell's house, and Senator Manners that we haven't visited yet.

"We've got all the plans laid for both of those places, and I shouldn't wonder if we could do them both in one night.

"Wouldn't it be a great joke on Nick Carter to be told by that stupid committee that two houses were robbed in one night, and the very night he was here, too? I guess he'd wish he hadn't been led to the train and put aboard and sent to New York as deftly as Roger and I did that little trick for him.

"I guess he'll find, when he is up against this outfit, that we are as clever as he is.

"This is no ordinary set of thieves that you are tackling, Nick Carter. You've got brains pitted against you this time.

"There's another thing, too: If Nick Carter does get gay and think he can down The Gentleman Raiders, he'll find that he is up against the most perfect organization in the United States, and that our captain is not a man to be trifled with. Captain Bob is a man who won't stand any fooling, and if that detective only knew that our chief is a man who can call hundreds to his assistance in a mighty short space of time, he'd think twice before he came here to this lonely spot to tackle us."

By all of which it will be seen that the combination of youthful outlaws was not deficient in self-esteem, at least; and that they were evidently captained by a personage who was familiar with the trade in which he was educating them.

Ten-Ichi thought he could understand that reference to a certain Captain Bob.

It meant merely that these youths had been led into their present occupation by the arguments and wiles of a regular crook, who while he captained them and forced them to do the dangerous work for him, while he directed them to rob the houses of their own parents and to bring the swag to him, was doubtless content to remain in the background, and so to reap the profits of their burglaries, while he took none of the risks of detection himself.

During the soliloquy, Hugh Danforth remained seated in the chair near the telegraphic instrument, and after he had ceased speaking, he remained silent for some time; but at last, with the muttered remark that he wondered what the time might be, he pulled his watch from his pocket and cautiously struck a match.

"Just midnight," he mused aloud, as the flame of the match flared up, and then, as if a door had suddenly opened behind him, thus causing a draft, the flame was extinguished before he had a chance to blow it out.

Ten-Ichi had leaned forward over his shoulder and quietly blown out the flame of the match almost as soon as it was lighted.

"That's funny," said Hugh, speaking to himself, of course. "I wonder if I left that door open."

He left his seat and crossed the room, only to find that the door was closed. Satisfied on that point, he returned to his chair near the window, and, after a moment of preparation, he struck a second match.

Again it was blown out almost as soon as it was lighted, but again there was not the slightest apparent reason for the incident.

"Must be a draft here from somewhere," muttered Hugh; but this time he did not leave his chair.

"It's midnight, anyhow," he continued, after a pause. "I might as well get out and go along to the rendezvous. There is no use in waiting here. The old folks are sound asleep by this time, sure. However, I might just as well make certain."

He moved his chair back from the table and proceeded to remove his shoes.

Having accomplished that, and placed them on the floor beside the table where he was seated, he tiptoed to the door, opened it, and passed out into the hall.

If Ten-Ichi had one fault in the world, it was his fondness for joking, and he saw in the episode of the shoes an opportunity to indulge himself in a little fun, so he glided forward, secured the shoes, and then, as silently as a shadow, followed Hugh into the hall.

He knew perfectly well what the young man intended to do. He knew that he would tiptoe to the door of the room where his father and mother slept, and listen there until satisfied that they were slumbering, after which he would not consider it important to wait longer in the house.

But Ten-Ichi was resolved to give the youth something to think about before he left the house to attend the meeting of The Gentlemen Raiders, and so he followed him closely, and in that same shadowlike silence that emitted no sound.

Hugh Danforth wore a white collar and cuffs, and therefore Ten-Ichi could follow every move he made with exactness, for there is almost always light enough, even in what we suppose to be inky darkness, to reflect upon anything that is white.

The young man approached the door of his parents' sleeping room with great caution, and then, dropping upon one knee, he pressed his ear against the threshold and listened.

It was then that Ten-Ichi glided forward.

Hugh was still upon one knee listening, when directly over his head, against the panel of the door, there sounded

a distant rapping, loud enough to awaken the inmates of the room.

It was probably the most astonishing thing that had ever occurred in the experience of Hugh Danforth.

For one instant he remained motionless, as if paralyzed by the sound, and then, as there came a sleepy "Who is there Is that you, Hughey? What is the matter?" from beyond the door, he scrambled to his feet and answered:

"Nothing," he said, but his teeth chattered in spite of him, when he spoke. "I thought I heard you call. I had been downstairs to get a glass of water."

"Is anything the matter, Hughey?" asked the voice of his mother.

"No. Nothing, mother, nothing at all. Good night," he replied.

He left the door then and hastened back to his own room without knowing, of course, that the shadow had preceded him, but he did not dare to strike a light, lest his father should follow him there to ascertain the real cause of the disturbance.

Instead, he drew back the coverings of the bed and piled into it with all his clothes on, so that in case he was followed, his father would not know that he had not undressed.

But there was no sound of pursuit, and after remaining there until he was confident that his parents were satisfied with his explanation, he climbed out again and crossed the room to the chair near the telegraph instrument and the window, where he had taken off his shoes.

"What in thunder could have made that noise?" he asked himself, aloud. "It sounded right over my head, but, of course, it wasn't. It must have been something outside the house."

Thus soliloquizing, he leaned forward and reached out for his shoes.

They were not where he expected to find them, and he passed his hand over the floor in a circle all around the spot where he was sitting, but there was not a sign of his shoes anywhere.

"That's funny," he muttered. "I could have sworn that I left them right here."

Again he made a thorough search, only again to be disappointed.

"I wonder if I carried them out in the hall with me?" he mused. "I think I'll go and see. I might have kept them in my hand until I listened at father's door, and then, because I was rattled, left them there. I'll find out, anyhow."

He crossed the room to the door and sought to open it, only to find that it resisted his efforts, and, upon investigation, to discover that the bolt on the inside had been moved into place.

"I'll swear that I did not bolt that door!" he muttered. "I wonder what in blazes is the matter with me to-night, anyhow!"

He pushed back the bolt as silently as possible and went out to search for his shoes.

Of course he did not find them, and presently he returned to his room again and was about to seat himself once more in his accustomed chair, when by the faint light that sifted in at the window, he discovered, much to his astonishment, his shoes.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed; and well he might, for his shoes were reposing peacefully, directly on the top of his telegraphic instruments.

"Who would have thought that I would be fool enough to put them there!" he said, aloud. "By thunder! I begin to think that I am bewitched. I'll put them on and get out of this."

He crossed one leg over the other and began to loosen the laces of one of the shoes, preparatory to drawing it on his foot, but he stopped suddenly and shivered as with a sudden attack of ague.

The laces of both shoes had been tied into several hard knots so that it was impossible for him to undo them; and that was a thing which he felt sure he had not done himself.

Hugh Danforth was beginning to be frightened.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MYSTERY DEEPENS.

"What in the world is the matter with me?" muttered the boy, sitting bolt upright in his chair and trembling like a leaf in a storm.

"Am I so nervous to-night, that I do these strange things without knowing that I do them?

"One thing is sure, I'll get out of the house without more delay."

He replaced the shoes on the floor, crossed the room to a closet, secured another pair, and was about to adjust them to his feet, when he heard the latch of his door click and he could feel rather than see that it swung open; and immediately he heard a shrill whisper, seemingly from the hallway.

"Hughey! Come here, quick!" said the whisper.

Startled, the boy leaped to his feet and darted across the room.

He knew that somebody had called him, but whether it was his father or his mother, he could not determine.

In his anxiety, he forgot for the instant that he was dressed and that he did not wish that either of his parents should see him so; but, nevertheless, when he reached the door, there was nobody there, and while he stood, peering into the darkness in the vain effort to discover the source of the alarm, he was startled into a sudden and only half-suppressed exclamation of pain and alarm, by feeling the sharp prick of a pin in one of his legs.

He leaped back into the room with a suddenness that almost brought him into collision with his tormentor, and in doing so, dropped the shoes he had carried in his hand so that they went clattering to the floor with considerable noise.

Realizing that the sound might have disturbed his father, he paused, breathlessly, and listened, but hearing no disturbance from the direction of the room where his parents were sleeping, he stooped to regain possession of his shoes.

They were not there, where he had dropped them!

"Good heavens!" he muttered, and then, in dismay and with a sensation that bordered on terror, he swept the floor with his hands, in a huge circle.

"This is terrible!" he whispered to himself, while beads of perspiration began to ooze from the tightened skin on his forehead.

"Am I going mad?" he asked himself, in dismay, "or is this house haunted by the Evil One? I'll light the lamp for a minute and see if that will set things right, for I can't stand this sort of thing another minute."

The lamp had stood on a table near the second win-

down of the room, but when Hugh reached it and stretched out his hand for the lamp to remove the chimney, it had disappeared.

There was no lamp there!

"I put it on that table," he muttered. "I'll swear I put it there!"

Again he searched for it, but it was nowhere to be discovered. Evidently it had taken to itself wings and flown away.

"This is simply awful!" breathed Hugh, trembling all over with fear.

Then, with a mighty effort, he pulled himself together, straightened himself, threw back his shoulders, and in a whisper that penetrated the entire room, he announced:

"Spirit or devil, whoever you are, wherever you be, you shall not frighten me," he said.

"You haven't done anything to hurt me yet," he continued, in the same penetrating whisper, "and until you do, I won't show the white feather. I'd be a fine fellow to be third chief of The Gentlemen Raiders if I could be frightened by a few things I don't understand, wouldn't I?"

He crossed back to the table where the telegraph instruments were, and again discovered more shoes resting upon them.

It was the second pair—the pair that he had dropped near the door, and this time, instead of the laces being wrought into hard knots, they had been entirely removed from the shoes.

"I wonder if there were laces in these shoes when I took them from the closet?" he asked himself. "I remember that they were broken and had been tied together.

"Probably mother has removed them," he decided, after a moment's thought. "Well, I haven't got any more shoes, so I'll have to put these on without lacing them, or stop to untie the knots in the others. I wonder what time it is, anyway?"

Again he pulled his watch from his pocket.

It was attached to a fob, and he held it in one hand while with the other he searched in a second pocket for a match; but while he held it thus, the watch was snatched from one hand and the match from the other.

The two articles were taken from his hands almost at the same instant.

There was not a sound that he could hear when it was done, and he was not conscious of contact with anything whatever.

The articles had simply seemed to fly out of his grasp of their own volition.

The incident was altogether too much for the nerves of Hugh Danforth to bear.

He uttered a low, gurgling cry that could not have penetrated beyond the door of his room, leaped to his feet, and with one bound reached the window.

In an instant he threw up the sash, balanced himself for a moment on the sill, and then leaped lightly out into the darkness in his stockinged feet.

It was only a short distance to the ground, and he alighted without injury.

There he paused, and straightening himself, looked up at the window and shook his fist at it with wild and impotent rage.

If he could have seen through it into the darkness beyond, and have discovered the black shadow that stood there watching him, and shaking with laughter, his rage would doubtless have been tenfold greater.

As it was, he did not hurry away.

Out from the black darkness of the room where so many mysterious things had happened, into the half light of the starry but moonless night, his courage returned to him, and he wondered now why he had fled so precipitately.

Ten-Ichi, in the meantime, perceiving that Hugh did not immediately seek to escape from the vicinity of the house, was not idle.

With deft fingers, he at once attacked the telegraphic instruments.

A few turns of the thumb screws released the hammers from the sounder and relay and the finger-and-thumb piece from the key, thus rendering the instruments absolutely useless; and then, having waited until Hugh, now bereft of his watch and fearing that he might be late for the meeting, so frightened that he could not have been induced to return to his room had such a thing been possible without a ladder, turned away through the darkness to keep the rendezvous with his associates.

As soon as the boy did turn away, Ten-Ichi flung the brass parts of the telegraph instrument over his head above the trees, so that they would strike the ground some distance in advance of where he was walking, knowing that the sound of their fall upon the earth would attract his attention for time sufficient to enable the young detective to drop to the ground outside without there being the slightest chance of his being seen.

And that simple feat he accomplished with ease.

The brass pieces had served two purposes. They had distracted the attention of Hugh, and by their removal from the room, the telegraph instruments were rendered useless until they were found again or until others had been procured.

The night was not cold, and therefore the absence of Hugh Danforth's shoes gave him no inconvenience other than the absurdity of the circumstance of his being in his stockinged feet, for he well knew that his friends would ask no end of questions about them, when he arrived at his destination.

Wild horses could not have drawn him back into that terrible room in the darkness.

Too many incidents of a mysterious nature had happened there before he left it, and now that he was well out of it, and had opportunity for sober thought, he became frightened from another point of view, for his good sense told him that spirits were not abroad to perform such acts as he had witnessed, or rather felt, and that it could have been accomplished only by human agency.

It followed, therefore, that somebody had been in his room with him.

He paused among the bushes near the gateway to think it over, and thus gave Ten-Ichi an opportunity to roll into a hasty bundle the clothing he had discarded among the lilacs before he entered the house, for he preferred still to maintain his black covering while he pursued Hugh Danforth to the meeting place of The Gentlemen Raiders.

"Gentlemen Raiders, forsooth!" he murmured. "I'll teach these boys a lesson that they won't soon forget, before I am done with them."

Then, suddenly, while he waited, Hugh started away through the night, evidently having decided that he much proferred to face the ridicule of his friends than to return to the house for his shoes.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE SECRET OF THE OLD WELL.

It is rarely that there is a community among the suburban districts surrounding any large city that has not its deserted mansion.

Usually it is one of the old-time grander sort that has long since fallen into disuse and therefore into decay and ruin.

Usually, also, it belongs to the estate of some suddenly rich person, who, having purchased the property upon which it is located, decides that the old house is not good enough for him, and, therefore, builds a new one upon another site.

Such houses as these are all too often the resort of local criminals, or of tramps, or grafters of some sort, who find in its seclusion a fitting abode with accompanying freedom from observation for their uses.

It is an easy matter to darken windows and doors so that no ray of light from the interior can penetrate to the outer world.

Such an operation requires merely that the windows be carefully and systematically boarded, and that the boards be in turn covered with several layers of thick black cloth or felt, and if particular care is taken in such preparations, neither light nor sound will penetrate to the outside to warn the uninitiated that the house is tenanted by people who have no right to be there.

It was a place precisely of this description which "The Gentlemen Raiders" had selected for their headquarters, and had it been erected for their purpose alone, it could not have offered better opportunities, nor have been more conveniently located, or more completely isolated from the inspection of chance observers.

The house in question was known as the Magowan mansion, because the Magowan family had been the last people who had occupied it.

But almost a score of years had passed since the house had been lived in, and since that time even the direction of the highway had been changed, so that now it stood nearly half a mile back from the road, and was almost hidden from view by a dense growth of trees that had once formed a pleasant shade around it, but had become with the neglect of years a forest of half-grown trees and undergrowth commingling with the larger specimens so that a person in passing that way would never discover the presence of the mansion at all unless attention was particularly called to it.

In a direct line, as the crow flies, it was almost two miles from the center of Prothero Park, and in a direction opposite to that which had been so systematically visited by the burglars.

It was to the Magowan mansion that the footsteps of Hugh Danforth led, and, therefore, to that place where Ten-Ichi followed him.

As soon as they were well among the trees that surrounded it, Ten-Ichi deposited his bundle of clothing in a safe place, where he could quickly find it when wanted, and then, weaponless, of course, and arrayed precisely as he had been while he played the tricks upon Hugh, he glided behind his leader like the shadow he was.

Hugh Danforth approached the house with confidence, and when directly in front of it, and therefore among the densest part of the trees, he made a noise that was so precisely like the chirping of a tree toad that Ten-Ichi was amazed, astounded by the perfection of the imitation.

After delivering the signal he was silent until it was answered, and then he moved forward rapidly, skirting the house, and presently he seemed to drop out of sight, so suddenly did he disappear from view.

When he had gone, Ten-Ichi glided forward to the spot where he had disappeared, and found, much to his surprise, that he was standing on the platform that surrounded an old and apparently long-disused well.

An old well house covered it, and a rope hung from a windlass into the darkness below, just as if a bucket had been lowered and left there.

It was plainly evident to Ten-Ichi that Hugh had gone down that rope, and it was equally certain that he must not attempt to follow until he was sure that he could do so without running the risk of discovery.

To be discovered now, meant the utter spoliation of all his plans, and that while the work he had laid out for the night was less than half consummated.

While he stood there, concealed by the shadows of the trees, wondering what should be his next move, another tree toad chirped at the front of the house, and he drew farther back, realizing that another one of The Gentlemen Raiders had arrived and was signaling his approach.

He had not long to wait, for the signal, as before, was answered, and this time Ten-Ichi succeeded in locating the answering call, for it came, or seemed to come, from the cupola of the house.

Moreover, Ten-Ichi thought, the fact that it was replied to much more quickly than had been the case in the first instance, showed that Hugh had been the first arrival, and that now the inmates of the house, if there were more than one, were on the watch for the others who were expected.

He watched closely the second form as it appeared out of the darkness and approached the well, and was not surprised to discover, first that it belonged to Roger Cameron, and second that he made no hesitation in seizing upon the rope that dangled in the well and sliding rapidly down it out of sight.

Presently, after that, a third arrival was announced in the same way; then a fourth; then a fifth; then a sixth, a seventh, an eighth, and a ninth—and then they ceased to arrive.

"Either that completes the outfit or the others have not been notified, or could not come," Ten-Ichi decided. "And now it would appear as if the time has come for me to attend the meeting also."

For a moment he hesitated between two methods of procedure—that is, whether it would be better for him to descend by the rope in the well, or to attempt to enter the old house by another and safer means; but at last he decided upon following in the tracks of the others.

It was indeed fortunate that he did so, for the man to whom Hugh Danforth in his soliloquy had referred as Captain Bob was a crafty person in his calling, and he had provided admirably against surprise by connecting every door and window of the old house with a marvelously well-designed alarm which would give instant warning in the room where he and his companions congregated, against any effort to enter the house by any other means than the old well.

However, Ten-Ichi chose the right course, as events proved, and, although he knew that he ran a risk of drop-

ping directly into the arms of one of those who had preceded him, he took the rope in his hands and permitted his body to slide down it.

Hardly had he committed himself to the rope when a tenth chirping of the tree toad sounded from in front of the house, and he knew that in another moment he would be between two fires—between the coming of another arrival and the presence of the person who would be sent to give him admittance at the bottom of the well.

It was too late to climb out of the well again, for he knew that he would arrive at the top just in time to meet the newcomer face to face.

There was, therefore, nothing for him to do save to get to the bottom as quickly as possible and to trust to the darkness, his luck, and the black costume that enveloped him, to conceal him from view.

He was halfway down the rope when one of his feet touched against a projection in the wall of the well, and as he slid on past it, he thrust out one hand, only to discover that above the projection there was a deep hole in the wall, and that the projection itself was a board that had evidently been wedged into place in order to afford a foothold for those who might have occasion to descend.

Plainly that black hole was the entrance to an underground entrance to the house; and it was also plain to Ten-Ichi that he must himself hasten to the bottom of the well, and remain there until he was sure that the momentary danger was past.

Fortunately the well was dry. There was, in fact, nothing more than a heap of rubbish and dried leaves that had collected there, half filling the place, and it was so near to the projection in the wall where the black hole was located that he had to crouch his body in order to prevent his head from reaching above the place where the newcomer's feet must tread.

A better place to observe what was to happen could not have been designed.

He was within a few feet of the entrance hole, so near in fact that he could have reached his arm into it from where he stood, and yet he was thoroughly concealed from view.

Even while these thoughts passed through his mind, the rope which he had released from his grasp began to sway, and in another instant the quick breathing of some person in the act of descending reached his ears.

The tenth member of the burglars' gang caught upon the projection with his foot and hung poised there for a moment.

Ten-Ichi could hear him fumbling with his hands along the well, and, presently, he muttered to himself, in a low tone:

"Confound it," he said. "I can never find that beastly rock. "It's dead against the rules to light a match here, but I've got to do it."

There was a moment of silence and then the sound of the scratching of a match against his clothing.

Ten-Ichi, from below, was watching every move carefully, well knowing that he could not himself be seen, and he saw the match flare up, saw that by its light the boy, who still clung to the rope with one hand, had discovered the thing he searched for, and saw him, ere the flame died out, seize upon a pointed stone that projected from the wall beside the hole.

Then all was darkness again.

"Well," thought the young detective, "it is lucky, after all, that I came into the well before this fellow arrived or I might have looked all night for the secret of entering the house and then not have discovered it.

"As it is, I think I will have no difficulty in following them now."

Listening, he heard a low, grating sound, as if some heavy object were pushed aside, and in another instant the rope hung free again.

Then the rumbling sound was repeated, and after that all was silence.

Ten-Ichi knew that the last one to arrive at the rendezvous had entered the house by the secret passage, and he was assured that nobody had come to meet him, so now he felt that he could proceed on his way without incurring much risk of being intercepted.

It was the work of an instant to mount to the narrow platform before the hole in the wall which he was now convinced was no hole at all, but merely a foothold carved out of the wall to render the means of entrance to the secret passage more practicable.

The young detective had no means of striking a light.

He was utterly devoid of any implement of any kind. He had only the acute senses which God had given him, to rely upon, but he considered himself well equipped at that. His black suit was worth a dozen guns and a score of lights, to his way of thinking.

Nevertheless, he knew that he could stand but a small chance of escaping from that house with his life, if he should be discovered.

Not that he believed that the boys who had been led into such nefarious business would deliberately murder him, but he was certain in his own mind that the Captain Bob to whom Hugh Danforth had referred was an old offender, and a criminal who would not hesitate to slit a throat if it happened to get between him and his liberty.

He had located the movable stone quite accurately, and he was not a minute in finding it.

He tried pushing upon it, but it remained firmly in its place and refused to move.

Then he tried a side motion, first one way and then the other, and then up and down, but with the same effect.

Finally he pulled upon it, and instantly it left the wall and jutted out into the well.

Ten-Ichi, feeling along behind it, discovered that it was fastened to a stiff iron rod which extended backward through the wall.

At the same instant he again heard the grating noise that he had noticed while he waited at the bottom of the well, and he knew that the aperture was open.

Feeling his way with great care, he stepped through the opening thus made, and, discovering by the touch of his hands that there was a door which had been made of stones in evident imitation of the wall of the well, he passed beyond it and closed it behind him, satisfied that the single stone and the iron rod on the outside, had been pulled back into place, and that he had left the entrance as secure as he had found it.

Then, feeling carefully around him again, he slowly made his way forward along a narrow and low passageway, and in three minutes more he stepped out of the narrow place into what his best judgment told him was the cellar of the house.

In that deduction he was quite right, as he was presently to discover.

He paused to listen, and even as he did so, he heard the sound of half-suppressed laughter from the room over his head, and he knew that he was about to witness a meeting of The Gentlemen Raiders in their Magowan mansion stronghold.

CHAPTER IX.

POSSESSED OF THE DEVIL.

Ten-Ichi experienced no difficulty in finding his way through the interior of the house.

was evident that the occupants were so confident of the adequacy of their defensive arrangements that they believed a guard of any sort other than the bells upon the windows and doors unnecessary.

At all events no impediment obstructed Ten-Ichi's passage to the main floor of the house, where he speedily discovered that the room which in the palmy days of the mansion had been used as a banqueting hall had been adopted by this gang of gentlemen burglars for their principal uses.

It was, in fact, an enormous room, and it was paneled from floor to ceiling and across the ceiling also, in black walnut.

In the center of the room was an old-fashioned dining table, which in the days of entertainment might easily have seated thirty people, and around one end of that massive piece of furniture the eleven inmates of the room were congregated, while in the center of that part of the table that was between them burned a solitary lamp that was almost enveloped in a dark green shade.

The other end of the table stretched away into the darkness and gloom of the other end of the room.

No arrangement more perfect for the operations of Ten-Ichi could be imagined.

The dark finishings of the room, the lofty gloom of the place, the single group of persons with the lamp between them, so that they were all facing it, thus confining their realm of vision to the glow of light that was directly upon the table, and placing the other quarters of the room in comparatively black darkness, added to the intentness of the group upon the subject, rendered Ten-Ichi, in his costume of black and with his silent tread, which upon the thick rug that covered the floor gave out absolutely no sound whatever, like a shadow indeed.

Even the door by which he entered the room had not been securely closed, and it gave out no sound when he pushed it open and entered.

He was sure, while he stood there behind them looking upon their meeting and listening to all that was said between them, that if they had turned in a body and studied the corner of the room where he had halted, it would have required a steady effort of a full minute for one of them to have discovered even the outlines of his figure against the black walnut trimmings of the dining hall.

They were all laughing, and, after a fashion, guying Hugh Danforth when Ten-Ichi entered, and it was evident that he had been relating his inexplicable experiences in his own house.

While they indulged in an unusually hearty burst of laughter, half suppressed though it was, Ten-Ichi looked around him to take his bearings.

He discovered that very little of the old and massive furniture of the room had been removed at the time the house was deserted by its owners.

The great carved sideboard was there; the massive old sofa, now worn threadbare and without an unbroken spring left in its make-up; many of the huge chairs and several other large pieces of furniture still stood against the walls—and not exactly against the walls, either, for a narrow seat that had once been upholstered in leather cushions, ran entirely around the room, and the articles of furniture, standing against the seat, left a space between them and the wall which began two feet above the floor and afforded a space of about fifteen inches behind them.

"I can play hide-and-seek with them here to beat the band!" mused Ten-Ichi, with a smile.

While the young detective was engaged in studying these things, those in the room continued to make sport of Hugh Danforth.

"Upon my word, Hugh," said Roger Cameron, "I gave you credit of not being afraid of anything. I suppose you have made up your mind that you were haunted, eh?"

"I don't know, and I don't care what you call it," replied Hugh, with some warmth, "the point is that the things I have described happened. I'm not lying to you. Do you think I would have come all the way here without my shoes if——"

"If you weren't rattled with fright? No, I do not."

"Drop that, Roger," said Hugh harshly, "or I will mighty soon show you that I'm not afraid of you, at least."

The man whom Ten-Ichi at once decided was Captain Bob, rapped sharply upon the table with his knuckles, as a call to order.

"No more of this," he said coldly. "If there is any quarreling going on here, I'll take a hand in it myself, and you know what that will mean.

"I think," he continued, and his voice took on a more genial tone, "the whole thing can be explained upon the hypothesis that Hugh dropped asleep while he was waiting for the time to come to leave the house, and that he dreamed these things he has told us. That he awoke, frightened and jumped out of the window before he had time to think.

"We'll let it go at that, anyhow. It isn't an unusual thing to have happen. I've had an experience like it myself, and it's nothing to be ashamed of."

"But, I tell you——" began Hugh, when the sharp rapping of Captain Bob's knuckles interrupted him.

"We'll have no more of this argument," he said. "That settles it. We have a much more important thing to discuss, for, as I understand it, the presence of Nick Carter in our midst is no idle jest."

"Bet your life it isn't," thought Ten-Ichi, with a smile. "I wonder what they would say now if they knew that Nick Carter's assistant is in the same room with them, listening to everything they are saying."

"I have run up against Carter two or three times in my experience," continued Captain Bob, "and I am free to confess that I don't care for another experience."

"Run you in?" asked Hugh.

"Three years once and two the other time," replied Captain Bob grimly.

"Well, he was here, sure enough," said young Cameron; "and he said he was coming back."

"If he said he was coming back, he'll come back. You can lay your pile on that proposition," said Captain Bob, with an air of conviction.

"Then what is the best thing for us to do, Bob?" asked one of the others who had not spoken before.

"There is only one thing for us to do, and that is to go out of business; quit the game."

"Do you mean that we are to disband altogether?" asked another, in alarm.

"Certainly not."

"Then what do you mean?"

"I mean that we will adjourn this meeting to-night for thirty days, that's what I mean. We will each go our separate ways during that time; I mine, and each of you yours. Not one of us will come near this place again till the expiration of that time, and then we will meet as we have met to-night and decide whether we can begin operations over again, or if we will have to wait still longer.

"And during that thirty days," continued the speaker, "you have got to be mighty good boys in your own homes, too, or that detective will get on to you, and your governors will be down on top of you like a ton of lead. You see——"

Captain Bob's remarks ceased abruptly, and he uttered a yell that would have done credit to a Comanche Indian. At the same time he leaped from his chair into the air, and if the table had not been too heavy for half a dozen men to have lifted, it would have been overturned by the impact of his body against it.

Uttering fierce curses and growls, he danced up and down on the floor, with one hand clasped against his body behind him, while the others also leaped to their feet and stood staring at his antics in amazement.

Ten-Ichi, who had jammed a pin halfway to the head into the soft flesh of The Gentlemen Raiders' captain, glided swiftly backward and lost himself behind one of the pieces of heavy furniture.

Captain Bob, as soon as he had sufficiently recovered his equanimity, glared around the room and then into the faces of his companions.

"That might have been a rat that bit me," he said, "but I want to say this: If it wasn't a rat, and if any of you fellows think you can play jokes on me, I'll make the one who does it wish that he had never seen the light of day."

Every boy in the room disclaimed any and all joking propensity, and gradually they settled down to business again; but it was plain that Captain Bob had his suspicions that one of the boys had been making game of him; also that he regarded Hugh Danforth and Roger Cameron as the likely ones, and that he regarded the story Hugh had told of his experience as part of a put-up job for that purpose.

"For my part——" began Roger Cameron, when he also came to a sudden stop, for he had received a resounding whack against the side of his head which dazed him.

Instantly he leaped to his feet, and, turning to the companion who sat next to him on that side, demanded in an angry tone:

"What in thunder do you mean by hitting me in that manner?"

"Never touched you," replied the boy addressed.

"You're a——"

"Here, there, none of that! Sit down!" ordered Captain Bob sternly.

"Cooney hit me," said Roger.

"Never touched you. You're dreaming, like Danforth, that's what you are."

"Sit down!" roared Captain Bob.

Roger complied, but he had scarcely resumed his seat when the chair occupied by Dan Cooney was pulled over backward, and Dan himself was hurled violently to the floor.

He bounded to his feet in a rage, and, before anybody conjectured his intent, he threw himself with all the fury of a tiger cat upon Roger.

Several of the others sprang forward to separate them, and for a moment the room was in commotion.

But it subsided presently, and, obeying a stern order from their captain, each one of the boys took his place, standing, before his chair, and with his hands resting upon the table, one hand crossed over the other.

"Now," said Captain Bob, slowly and impressively, "you are standing in the position in which you each took the oath of allegiance to our brotherhood. You all know that I do not call you into this position unless I am in earnest in what I say. Somebody here is trying to be fresh to-night, and that sort of thing won't go down with me. I won't stand for it, not for a holy minute!

"You hear me!" called the leader, his voice choking with suppressed rage. "When I give the order I want you all to resume your seats and we'll proceed with the business of this meeting, and if there is any more of this infernal horse play, two things will happen.

"Somebody will get hurt, and badly hurt, or my name isn't Captain Bob, and, moreover, we'll disband this organization not to meet again. Do you all hear me, and do you understand?"

"Yes," they replied, as with one voice.

"Then sit down—and remember."

They did sit down with a vengeance. They sat down on the floor—the entire eleven, including Captain Bob himself.

The chairs, somehow, had been moved back while they were standing with their hands resting upon the table—moved backward just far enough to be out of their reach when they sought to resume them, and such a chorus of curses and growls, mingled with laughter, as issued from beneath the table had not been heard in that room for many a year.

Meanwhile Ten-Ichi had glided swiftly behind the great sideboard, and beneath the black hood that covered his head and face was grinning broadly.

When Captain Bob regained his feet he pounded vigorously upon the table with his fists.

He felt that his dignity as chief of the organization had been assailed after a manner that could not be overlooked, and he was furiously angry; and, while he was pounding and talking at the same time, Ten-Ichi slipped from his place of concealment and flitted, like the shadow he was, beneath the table at the end of it that was farthest from where the group was gathered.

He crept forward silently while Captain Bob was still talking, and then suddenly, just as the scoundrel was at the most vehement point of his discourse, the young detective seized him by both feet and pulled them from under him with a quick jerk.

At the same instant he turned, and, with lightninglike quickness, jabbed the pin he held in his hand into the anatomy of one after another of the boys standing around the table.

In an instant everything was in the wildest confusion.

Such a chorus of yells as went up from the boys beggars description.

The curses and oaths that came from the place where Captain Bob had been upset, defy reproduction; and then, as if to cap the climax of it all, the lamp on the table was extinguished, and in its stead a brilliant glow of red fire filled the room from a seething mass of flame and smoke at the center of the table.

And dancing upon the table in the midst of it all was the very devil himself, horns and all, and as red as the color of blood.

CHAPTER X.

THE DANCING SKELETON.

Ten-Ichi was aware that he was undertaking a very great risk in making such an exhibition of his powers, for it was more than likely that every person in that room was armed, and that one or more of them would remember the fact, and shoot.

Men are apt to forget ordinary measures of caution when they are frightened, and the noise that a pistol might make would not be remembered until after it had been fired.

He was, therefore, thoroughly upon his guard when he donned the red suit over his black one, and otherwise prepared for the great act of the night.

He knew that there would be an interval covering perhaps a minute when every one of them would forget their weapons in their fright and astonishment, and upon that minute he relied.

When they scrambled to their feet and saw, with horror in their eyes, what appeared to be the Evil One himself playing with the fires of Hades upon the very table around which they had been seated, it was altogether too much for the nerves of most of them.

Several of the boys bolted precipitately for the door, only to find that both doors, which gave admittance and egress to and from the room, were locked, and that the keys had disappeared, The windows, of course, had long ago been boarded up, and so they were one and all prisoners.

Others, who did not leap for the doors, fell prone upon the floor, in paroxysms of terror.

Roger Cameron turned as white as a ghost and promptly fainted away.

Hugh Danforth uttered a yell of terror, and, throwing himself upon the floor, burst into tears.

Dan Cooney dove beneath the table, pulled his coat over his head, and groaned in fright.

Each and every one of the boys who were present were affected in different ways, but there was no one among them who was not thoroughly terrorized.

Captain Bob himself was no exception to the rule.

A criminal all his life, he was a victim of the most aggravated form of superstition, and he did not for one instant doubt that it was a real, genuine, original devil that danced on the table in front of him.

Nevertheless, self-preservation is the first law with all his class, and the instinct of it was not lacking in him in this instance.

Much can happen in half a minute of time when things are moving swiftly, as they were in the dining room of that old house, and for perhaps thirty seconds Captain Bob was paralyzed with terror.

Then, bethinking himself that he was armed, his hand dropped swiftly to his side; but at the same instant Ten-Ichi leaped into the air.

He sprang directly upon the shoulders of Captain Bob, and, of course, bore him downward to the floor.

Then, during the interval while the man was falling, Ten-Ichi managed to possess himself of the revolver that Captain Bob had pulled.

He wrenched it free from the criminal's grasp, and—none too gently—rapped him on the head with the butt of it, so that while the doughty captain sank in a heap to the floor under the weight of the young detective, he was also rendered unconscious by the severe blow he received over his temple.

This was precisely what Ten-Ichi desired most to accomplish.

He knew that if he could deprive the boys of their leader, confusion would reign, and that by taking advantage of that confusion he could accomplish everything he had decided upon since the moment when he became convinced that the mysterious burglaries of the neighborhood of Prothero Park were committed by the young sons of the most respectable members of that community, led by an ex-convict, who had worked upon their love of the romantic to lead them astray.

Ten-Ichi was determined to save those boys, one and all, and also to make such an example of the man who was responsible for the sins they had committed, that they would not soon forget the experience.

The moment he struck Captain Bob on the head with the butt of the pistol, and while confusion still reigned supreme in the room, Ten-Ichi darted away again into obscurity behind the furniture.

It required only a moment of time for him to slip out of the red devil's costume he wore, and to remove one of the remaining pads from beneath his black clothing, where he had concealed it.

He also knew that Captain Bob would not recover consciousness for some time to come, and that he had ample opportunity for the rest of the things that he wanted to do.

The packet which he now unfolded was enveloped in oiled silk, but was made of the same thin Japanese material as the others.

More than that, while he was putting it on behind the great walnut sideboard, there were places on it where it glowed like fire behind a screen.

As a matter of fact, it was also black, but traced upon it was a perfect representation of a skeleton, done with a phosphorescent substance that made the ribs, and skull, and the bones generally, stand out with a hideous reality.

While he worked he could hear some of the boys sobbing as if their hearts were breaking, others tried vainly to escape by way of the door, only to find that escape was utterly impossible, others tackled the windows, only to discover that their efforts were futile, and still others called vainly for Captain Bob, who, of course, did not answer.

And then, horror of horrors; another figure appeared upon the table, and this time, as if to add to the awful terrors of the moment, it was a dancing, gibbering skeleton, and from its bones little flames of pale-blue seemed to dart hither and thither.

Then, while Ten-Ichi danced, he began to chant, and as

he chanted, he called one by one the name of every boy in that room, for he had learned them all while he listened to them before he began his hour of terror.

"You have sent for me, and I have come to you," he chanted.

"Out of the terrors of the lurid fires of Hades I have come to you. I have come here to claim your souls and to take you with me into the regions of hell.

"I will strip your breast over your hearts, and I will cut a gash there. From the blood of each one of you that flows from the region nearest your hearts, I will make you sign your names to my scroll in your own blood. Then you will belong truly to me. When you die I will come to claim you, and then when I roast you in the fires that burn forever I will dance around you and laugh at you. And I will tell you how you have made your fathers, and mothers, and sisters suffer, and you will laugh with me, knowing that you are worthy of the fires of hell because you have made those who love you suffer tortures that are worse than hell."

And so he chanted on for many minutes, depicting every crime they had committed in such a manner that they saw the utmost horror of their sins, and so that they understood, as they never had before, the effect of the wrongs they had done.

Human nature—that is, boy human nature that has not yet reached the age of twenty, could not endure that sort of thing for long, and there was not a boy there who was really bad, just as there was not one there who was not brought face to face with the consequences of his acts in a manner that could not have been accomplished in any other way.

While Ten-Ichi danced and chanted they cried and moaned. They were a repentant crowd.

They had even ceased to call for Captain Bob.

Then what appeared to them to be a horrible thing happened before their eyes.

The skeleton began to disappear.

First the skull went out of sight.

That was followed by the ribs and arms while the legs still dangled before them, supporting nothing; and then the leg bones also vanished.

Ten-Ichi was simply peeling off the skeleton costume and returning it to its oiled silk envelope, and as that left him in black, and, therefore, invisible to them, they could see nothing whatever but the results of the operation as it progressed.

Then, from a corner of one of the little packets, Ten-Ichi took a small package.

It contained a small quantity of the famous Japanese polpa powder, which produces instant unconsciousness upon all who breathe it unless the nostrils and the mouth are protected by a piece of linen or silk, through which it will not sift.

Having bound a black silk handkerchief over his black hood to tighten it, Ten-Ichi threw the package against the ceiling with a force that burst it, and then he waited.

CHAPTER XI.

CONCLUSION.

When the ten boys, who comprised the membership of that organization known as The Gentlemen Raiders, opened their eyes, the boards had been removed from the windows of the great dining room, and daylight was streaming in upon them.

It was a most remarkable spectacle, too, that their awakening senses witnessed, for they were one and all seated in the same chairs they had occupied during their meeting, and they were grouped around the table in precisely the same relative positions they had occupied when the manifestations of the devil first began.

There was only one noticeable absentee, and that was Captain Bob. He was nowhere to be seen.

But there was another astounding fact connected with their waking, and that was that each one of them was tied firmly in his chair so that there was no possibility of leaving it.

Their ankles were tied together and drawn back under the chairs; their elbows were pinioned behind them; a rope encircled each neck and was thence passed around the chairs; other ropes were around their bodies, and so securely fastened were they that not one of them was able to alter his position.

Then, while they gazed in consternation into each other's faces, the door opened, and an Italian laborer appeared before them.

He advanced to the place that had been occupied by Captain Bob, and for a full minute stood there, looking into the faces of one after another of the captives, now thoroughly cowed.

"Me founda you here," he said presently. "Me taka the man you call El Capitan Bob away. Him is in prison fora murd. Him a bad man. Him nama is Bob Slayton. Him killa him wife last year, in Nova Yorka. Him go to the chair, anda pish! him die lika the dog he is. Now, boys, you watcha me."

In a twinkling Ten-Ichi, for it was he, tore off his wig, and his coat and vest. Then, bit by bit, he altered his disguise before their eyes until he stood before them exactly as Roger and Hugh had seen him the evening before—in the guise of the book agent.

"Two of you know me," he said. "The rest of you heard of me. Now, I have something to tell you: In the next room, or what was once the parlor of this house, are your fathers. The father of every one of you is there waiting to liberate you one by one. They know all about your crimes, and they are ready to hear your confessions, one by one. In making those confessions, let me advise you not to place any blame upon one another. Take all the blame for your own misdeeds to yourselves, personally.

"If you are truly penitent, your fathers are prepared to forgive you. I have their promises for that. When you have passed through this ordeal, let me advise that you reorganize your society, and that you drop the last name of it. Let your association henceforth be called the 'Independent Order of Young Gentlemen.' Make your rules strict, and see to it that you live up to them. Be as firm in your friendships for the sake of good as you were for the doing of evil.

"Roger Cameron," concluded the young detective, "I will take you to the next room first; after that I will take the others, one by one.

"Remember, if your fathers and mothers forgive you, God will do the same."

"Are you Nick Carter?" asked Roger, with a sob.

"No. I am only one of his assistants; but he is in the other room with your fathers, waiting for you. Nick Car-

ter loves boys, and he wants all boys to become good and splendid men. If you have any thanks to give, bestow them upon him when you go into the other room."

THE END.

In the next issue of this weekly, No. 54, out September 20, will be found a story entitled "The Secret Order of Associated Crooks; or, The Confederated Criminal Trust." The title of the story gives some idea of what the story is about, as it indicates a gigantic scheme for banding all classes of criminals together in the form of a trust.

A PAPER GOLD MINE.

Or, Sheridan Keene After Money-order Book 2409.

By ALDEN F. BRADSHAW.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

Several books of blank money orders are stolen from the safe in the post office at M——. One of them is filled out and cashed by the firm of Ray & Brett for a man who acted the part of a farmer. Detective Sheridan Keene, who is assigned to the case from the Boston detective bureau, suspects that this man is a notoriously clever crook, Johnny Guile. Keene visits the post office at M——, and discovers that whoever stole the money-order blanks also used the official rubber stamp, which has a slight defect, or had it used for him, in stamping the blanks. Keene suspects the money-order clerk, Nellie Harvey, knows more about the missing blanks than she is willing to admit.

CHAPTER III.

A PAPER GOLD MINE.

It was nearly six o'clock when Sheridan Keene left the post office, and he rightly inferred that Nell Harvey's duties would end at that hour, and that she would soon depart.

About five minutes after six she emerged alone, wearing a broad hat bedecked with red roses, while her outer garment was a tight jacket which set off to advantage her attractive figure.

"Very fly, indeed!" said Keene to himself. "She certainly is worth the watching."

She scarce had set foot upon the sidewalk before she sighted the detective on the opposite side of the street.

Keene had made sure that she should. He wanted to see how she would act in case she felt herself under suspicion.

Yet he pretended not to observe her. He appeared to be staring into a store window.

The girl frowned slightly when she noticed him, then started off up Main Street.

"Why is the fool waiting there?" she muttered, glancing back over her shoulder. "Does he hope to corner me? If he does, he'll get finely left, or my name isn't Johnny Guile!"

Chief Watts was right when he said that Johnny Guile was one of the cleverest in the business. His make-up as Miss Nell Harvey was perfection itself. He looked as pretty as a picture, and as innocent as the daughter of a Methodist minister.

It was indeed a desperately clever fellow, who could prepare himself in prison to pass the civil-service examinations, and after emerging from the Elmira jail finally secure his present situation in the postal service and deceive men and women alike as to his sex.

And although the party in the tight jacket and dashing hat was indeed the notorious swindler and criminal, Johnny Guile, he will, for the sake of convenience, at present be referred to in the character assumed.

Another backward glance told Miss Harvey that Keene was following on the opposite side.

Then she dove into a jewelry store and purchased a hatpin.

Keene stopped across the street to gaze at the antics of two bull puppies playing in a barber's window.

When Miss Harvey emerged from the store she carried her handkerchief in her hand; and before she reached the next corner she made a rapid sign with it, and a man standing on the curbing abruptly turned and disappeared down the side street.

"He was waiting for her," Keene instantly decided; "and she gave him warning. Hello! she is going to call me down."

Miss Harvey had turned sharply at the corner, and was crossing the street.

Then she came toward the detective, bowing and smiling as if surprised at seeing him.

Keene immediately stopped her, politely raising his hat.

"Which is the nearest way to the railway station, Miss Harvey?" he inquired. "I am somewhat turned around."

"Down the next side street," she replied, with one of her innocent smiles. "It will take you straight to the station."

"Thank you."

"I do hope, sir, you will soon be able to arrest those thieves."

"I have no doubt of it, Miss Harvey," nodded Keene affably, as they parted.

"Guess again!" was the mental comment of the other.

She waited until Keene had turned the corner, then put the boot on the other leg and followed him.

Keene was too cunning to look back. While wiping his brow with his handkerchief as he walked he again resorted to his mirror, and discovered that the girl was fifty feet behind him, watching his every movement.

Entering the station, Keene at once bought a ticket for Boston, and boarded the first train.

Then Miss Harvey was satisfied that he meant what he had said, and really had returned to the city.

But Sheridan Keene left the train at the first stop, and took an electric car back to M——.

It was dark when he arrived, and close upon eight o'clock.

He at once inquired the way to Elm Street, where he had been informed by the postmaster that Miss Harvey had lodgings.

He had no difficulty in finding the house, and he strongly suspected that she would have a caller that evening—the man to whom she had given warning a little earlier. The circumstance alone was sufficient to warrant this suspicion.

From the opposite side of the street Keene made a survey of the house. It was a two-story wooden dwelling, with a yard and garden at the rear. There was a light in the hall, but one room only was illumined, that of the second floor back.

Crossing the street Keene peered through the narrow windows at either side of the front door.

Miss Harvey's jacket and hat hung upon the rack against the wall.

"She's at home right enough," said Keene to himself. "Now to discover if she is alone."

The side of the house offered him no advantage. Seeking the rear yard, however, he discovered that one of the chamber curtains was raised an inch or two from the sash.

Five feet below the windows was a shed, or porch, with a slanting roof. Rising to the break of this roof there was a wooden trellis, covered with a luxuriant grape vine.

"The very thing," muttered Keene. "It is a chance that invites discovery, but I must know who is in that room."

Moving with exceeding caution, he mounted the trellis and gained the roof of the porch. Creeping up over the shingles he reached the main body of the house, and found that, by holding fast to the window casing, he could stand erect and look into the room.

The chamber contained the very parties Keene had anticipated—Nell Harvey and the man Keene had seen leave the street corner when the girl flirted her handkerchief.

The chamber door was closed, and the two occupants of the room, evidently aware of being alone in the house, were speaking in ordinary tones, sufficiently loud to be overheard by the detective.

But Johnny Guile had not removed his disguise. He was too clever to take chances of an interruption, and of his sex being unexpectedly discovered.

Among the first words to reach the ears of the detective was the mention of his own name.

"Oh, the man was Sheridan Keene right enough!" Miss Harvey was exclaiming. "He gave Oliver his name, and I know him by reputation. I didn't dare chance speaking to you on the street, lest he should make a mark of you also. So I gave you the tip to vamoose."

"Do you think he has tumbled to anything?" demanded the other.

He was a short, stocky young man, with a smooth face and sharp gray eyes, and his features indicated that he was an Irishman. His name was Terrance Malloy.

"There is little doubt that he has discovered something," was the reply; "but I have not yet learned what."

"You think he suspects you?"

"Why should he have shadowed me, if not? Yes, he surely has tumbled upon something."

"What do you mean to do about it?"

"Hang to my position in the office, of course, until I find out just where we stand," was the decisive rejoinder. "I am not afraid of him."

"But you are taking the chance of arrest," protested Malloy.

"There's little danger of that just yet," was the reply. "Keene will not arrest me alone. I am on to all the moves of this fly detective, and he will plan to make me the cat's-paw by which he can locate the rest of the gang, and recover the stolen money-order books. What would be the good of arresting me alone? He'd know I would not betray the others."

"There is something in that," nodded Malloy approvingly.

"Sure there is! The recovery of the stolen money orders is of more account than nailing me, never doubt that. We have nearly eight hundred of them, Terry, and it will be like child's play to get cash for them. We cannot hope to work the offices much, as I at first thought, for the department in Washington is already sending out warning cards."

"Well, what can we do?"

"We can work them off on the merchants, and that's a cinch."

"Sure; that is true enough," laughed Malloy.

"Eight hundred orders, say at fifty each, would run up to forty thousand dollars, and that's a good bit of money to divide among three of us. No, no, Terry, don't lose your heart. We have a paper gold mine in this, which even Sheridan Keene shall not corner. We will do him up for good and all before we will suffer that to come off."

"Oh, I am not losing heart," cried Malloy, with grim disapproval. "I am only asking what's to be done, now that the game is fairly started and suspected."

Clever Miss Harvey swung her chair nearer the table and bent her animated gaze on the man opposite.

"I'll tell you what's to be done," she said curtly. "Bill still has the money-order book, hasn't he?"

"Sure he has."

"And is still located at the old stand?"

"He'll not leave there till you say. That was the plan."

"And he will stick to it fast enough," nodded Miss Harvey. "And to-morrow morning you had better jump this town, which is becoming a trifle warm, and run down to Salem. Later in the day I'll drop you a line, telling you what turns up and what you are to do."

"Will you stay here?"

"I shall remain in the post office as long as I feel safe in doing so," was the prompt reply. "I want to learn just what Sheridan Keene has discovered, that I may know how best to head him off. He is the man we have most to fear, for Henderson don't cut any ice at all."

"Will you write me soon?"

"Not later than to-morrow, and in case anything turns up."

"And Bill?"

"I'll keep him informed also. So long as he has the money orders, there'll be no danger of my arrest; of that I am certain. I shall hold my position in the office till I think it grows too hot, and then make tracks for parts unknown."

"And I am to hear from you to-morrow or the next day?" demanded Malloy, half doubtfully.

"You surely will, I tell you. And you'd better be going, now, lest some of the family return and find you here."

Malloy rose to his feet and took his hat, and his companion accompanied him as far as the street door.

Keene decided that he had nothing more to learn then and there, and that there was less danger of discovery if he departed before the girl returned. Cautiously making his way down the slippery roof, he safely reached the yard, and departed over the back fence.

He already had decided by what plan he might locate the party called Bill, who evidently was the present custodian of the stolen money orders, the recovery of which was indeed of the greatest importance.

But the best-laid schemes both of criminals and detectives sometimes go amiss.

When Johnny Guile opened his back window next morning, the first thing to catch his eye was the torn grape vine at the edge of the shed roof; and closer inspection of the roof at once revealed the scratches of nails in the shingles, evidently made by the nails in the heels of a man's boots.

The scoundrel's face underwent a mighty change, and for a moment a look like that of murder itself showed in his dilating eyes. Then a malicious grin broke the expression of ominous hatred.

"So he played it on me, did he?" he growled, under his breath. "And he came back here to pipe me off! It's lucky I undressed in the dark! A very clever game, Mr. Keene, but I'll pay you back in your own coin, my man, never doubt that!"

Since he had not been immediately arrested, he did not fear arrest; and he made himself up as usual, and at the customary hour started for the post office.

CHAPTER IV.

THE TABLES TURNED.

As Johnny Guile had surmised, Sheridan Keene had no idea of arresting any person through whom, if left at liberty, he might locate and recover the stolen money orders. To recover these, and thereby prevent the swindling of perhaps hundreds of uninformed merchants, if not even an occasional careless or forgetful postmaster, was first of chief importance.

Keene now believed that, if he could alarm Nell Harvey into mailing a letter to her confederate who then had the money-order books in his keeping, their recovery and the arrest of the man could be quickly and quietly effected. The arrest of Nell Harvey and Malloy could be accomplished later.

He did not for a moment suspect that his eavesdropping of the previous night had been discovered. Nor did he for an instant imagine that Nell Harvey was the notorious Johnny Guile, a man whose shrewdness was nearly equal to his own, and who already suspected the very step the detective was about to take.

It was about ten o'clock when Keene entered the post office, and he at once approached the money-order window.

"Good morning, Miss Harvey," he called, on observing the latter at her desk.

She came down off the high stool and quickly joined him at the window.

"Do you bring me good news?" she asked, with a display of eagerness that would have deceived the hundredth man. "Have the stolen money orders been recovered?"

"Not yet; but they soon will be," replied Keene, with an air of conviction.

"Do you mean it?"

"Indeed, I do! I ran out here this morning merely to learn if any more orders from the stolen books have been cashed in this locality."

"There have been none reported to me."

"Is the postmaster about?"

"He has gone to Boston to meet the post-office inspectors."

"That's so? Then I'll not be able to see him."

"Not unless you wait until he returns."

"I don't believe I'll do that."

"Is there anything private about this business?" demanded the clerk, with an air of coquetry. "What's been discovered that makes you think the stolen books will be recovered so soon?"

It was the very question Keene had expected, and for which he was waiting.

And Johnny Guile knew well enough that it was; and that, when Keene answered it, he should learn just what evidence had been actuating the detective in shadowing him.

"There is nothing so private that you may not know," replied Keene artfully, returning the other's seductive glance. "But you had better keep the facts to yourself, Miss Harvey."

"Oh, I can keep a secret, if I am a woman."

"It is no work of mine, nor at all to my credit," explained Keene, joining in her laugh.

"Whose, then?"

"The credit belongs to Henderson."

"The post-office inspector?"

"Yes. The one who was out here yesterday."

"Is that so? He struck me as being a blockhead. What, in Heaven's name, did he discover?"

"I've not got all of the particulars, for there is more or less jealousy between us detectives," Keene carelessly rejoined, never losing the expression of his hearer's eyes. "But Henderson discovered when out here that the fraudulent order was stamped and dated by some one in this office."

"Impossible!"

And for an instant a look of genuine fear showed in Johnny Guile's blue eyes.

"It's a fact, so Henderson claims," asserted Keene.

"Can he prove it?"

"So he says."

"But how? If he can do that, he should be able to make an arrest."

"He expects to do so this afternoon."

"Do you know whom?"

"I don't," and Keene shook his head. "As I said before, there is some jealousy among us, and we don't tell all we know."

"Don't you know why he is so sure the order was stamped here?"

"I believe he discovered some imperfection in the stamp, Miss Harvey, which appears both in the order book here in use, and in the cashed money order stolen from book twenty-four hundred and nine."

"Funny you should not have discovered that as well as Henderson!"

"I am not as clever as Henderson," returned Keene, with equal dryness.

"Oh, indeed!" was the laughing rejoinder. "I'd never have dreamed that. Has he learned anything more?"

"He has discovered that the stolen books are now in the keeping of a man somewhere in the suburbs, and claims he can lay hands on him at the proper time. I don't know how much truth there is in it, Miss Harvey," added the detective, as he turned to go; "but I think without doubt that arrests will be made this afternoon."

"I hope so, I am sure!"

"My regards to Mr. Oliver."

"Thanks."

The last was said with a smile, as Keene bowed himself from the office; but the smile became a vicious grin, which developed into a scowl of bitterest malice, before

Johnny Guile had resumed his seat at the high desk in the money-order cage.

"So there was a crook in the stamp, eh?" he said to himself, sitting with his elbows on the desk and his brows knit in an ugly frown.

"And he would have me think Henderson made the discovery, would he? He is just about laying to locate the stolen books through some act of mine. Probably a letter to Bill. Well, well, I'll not disappoint him, the fool!

"Just the same, he has made this office too hot for comfort, and I think I'll up stakes and light out before I find myself with bracelets on instead of bangles. But I'll first even up accounts with Sheridan Keene, the infernal meddler!"

He took a pen, drew a block of paper under his hand, and began to write.

Sheridan Keene, meantime, rang at the door of a house on the opposite corner, from the side window of which the side windows of the post office could be easily seen.

"I am a Boston detective," he explained to the woman who answered his ring. "I wish to watch the movements of a person in the post office, who is suspected of robbing the mails, and I would like the privilege of doing so from one of your side rooms for a brief time if you please."

"I do not know that I have any objection," the woman replied, yet regarding him rather suspiciously.

Then Keene displayed his badge, which evidently had an effect, and he was admitted to a side parlor.

Through the lace draperies he could see across to the post office, and without being seen in turn.

The pretty money-order clerk still was seated at the desk, busily writing.

At the end of ten minutes she came down off the stool, and hastened to drop a letter in the mail pouch for which a wagon at the door was at that moment waiting.

"It is for the express into Boston!" Keene exclaimed to himself.

Hurriedly leaving the house, he waited until the mail wagon had turned the corner and was out of view from the post office, when he hailed the driver.

"Take me aboard, my man," he commanded.

"Can't do it, sir."

"But you must do it," persisted Keene, making himself known. "I am at present in the mail service, and after a letter thief. So move along there and make room for me."

This put a different complexion on the request, and Keene was allowed to ride.

At the station he boarded the mail car along with the pouch of mail, and stated his business to the railway postal clerk.

"Can you get that pouch open and find a letter for me before the train leaves?" he further demanded.

"Hardly, sir! They are ringing off already. We are express into Boston."

And Johnny Guile had known this train to be an express; and believed that Keene, once away on it, could not return for at least a couple of hours. In that time, he had decided he could safely jump the town.

"Open up the pouch, then," commanded Keene, as the train started. "I'll find the letter during the run in."

Although the mail was not heavy, it required some little time for him to fix upon the letter desired. He had no address save the name Bill, or William; and no means of identifying the letter except by the writing of the money-order clerk, which he had seen in the order book at the post office.

But he found in the mail five letters addressed to men named William, and the superscription on one of these was undoubtedly in the writing of Nell Harvey.

The letter was addressed to William Bloodsoe, Newburyport, Mass.

"You're taking a chance in opening that, Detective Keene," observed the clerk, when Keene started to break open the seal.

"If I am in error, we can put it in another envelope and readdress it," was the reply. "You can bear witness to my motive in opening it."

And without further argument Keene broke the seal.

Quickly drawing out the folded sheet, he glanced first at the signature.

It was the name he expected—Nell Harvey. Then he began at the top of the page and read:

"My Dear Mr. Sheridan Keene: What a very clever detective you are! You really ought to have a medal hung on you where every one might see it. It's a wonder to me why the steamboats and locomotives don't whistle your name. You and Henderson are peas from the same pod. You are as soft as a ripe tomato. If you fell down, your skin would open and you would all run out.

"When you next play the 'Peeping Tom' at a lady's bedroom window, take off your shoes, so the nails will not scrape the shed roof. Take a run down to Newburyport, Mr. Keene, and look up Mr. Bill Blodsoe. If you can find him, clap the darbies on him and run him in. If you cannot locate him, wire for me and I'll come to help you. I know where he is, or some other Bill!

"Should you come this way again, my dear Mr. Keene, run in and see me—if you can find me. But don't try to queer my little game with the money orders. If you do, and we chance to meet, take heed that you pull your gun quicker than I pull mine. If you fail to do so, the pastor of your church will have occasion to say what he thinks of you, and you'll give him no back talk.

"Really, my dear Mr. Keene, you're too soft! I think you would even cash a money order numbered twenty-four hundred and nine. I presume you hereafter will become my foe, instead of friend; and I am yours,

"Nell Harvey."

CHAPTER V.

QUICK WORK.

Although it did not tell him that she was a man in disguise, Sheridan Keene did not require the help of a college professor to appreciate the full significance of Nell Harvey's intensely sarcastic letter.

It told him how he had been duped. It told him that his espionage of the night before had been discovered, and that the letter by which he had hoped to accomplish so much was only a colossal hoax and taunt. And it told him not only that he was up against a person of consummate boldness and cunning, but also one who would not shrink even from taking his life, if the occasion should require it.

Aside from its startling significance, the sarcastic tone

of the letter was sufficient to spur the most resentful and resolute part of Keene's nature.

With his cheeks grown slightly pale from suppressed rage, and with a very ugly fire leaping up in his dark eyes, he crushed the letter into his pocket.

"Was it what you expected?" demanded the startled railway clerk.

"It was a deal more than I expected!" cried Keene, rushing to the car window to look out.

The train was speeding at about forty miles an hour through a suburban district, and approaching the outskirts of the next town.

Turning sharply about, Keene sprang up and caught the signal line to the locomotive, and gave it a violent jerk.

"Here, here," cried the clerk; "what are you doing?"

"Slowing down the train," thundered Keene, above the noise of the wheels.

"You must not do that!"

"Must not, perhaps! But I have!" cried Keene, clinging fast to the line to prevent the conductor from reversing the signal. "I must leave this train, and I mean to do it!"

The signal already was being answered, and the train was slowing down.

Without waiting to offer further argument or explanation, Keene dashed out to the rear platform of the car.

In a moment more he felt it safe to make the jump from the steps, and at the same moment the amazed conductor appeared through the door of the baggage car.

Keene threw back his coat and displayed his badge, at the same time crying loudly:

"It was a case of necessity, conductor. There's a dangerous criminal in M——, and I must return. Let her go, sir!"

With the last, and a nod to the road official, Keene leaped from the moving train and landed safely in the roadbed.

The conductor signaled the train to go on, then leaned out over the iron guard gate and waved his hand to the detective, a salute which Keene heartily returned.

This was a move which even Johnny Guile, with all his cleverness, had not anticipated.

"If she imagines me so soft," said Keene to himself, still supposing his daring opponent to be a woman, "I'll speedily give her occasion to change her mind."

Hastening across a strip of meadow he gained the street, and started for the nearest house having a stable adjoining.

He found a young man in the yard engaged in grooming a horse.

"Hitch up that animal at once and take me to M——," Keene cried peremptorily. "It's a case of life and death."

The young man looked surprised, but quickly took in the explanation made by the detective, and did what the latter commanded.

It required but a few moments to harness the horse into a light bugy, and with the young man by his side Keene soon was riding furiously over the road toward the town from which he so recently had departed.

"How long a drive is it?" he asked.

"About four miles."

"And how soon can you make it?"

"In about fifteen minutes, sure."

"Are you acquainted in the town?"

"Oh, yes; I used to live there."

"Take me straight to the post office."

"All right, sir."

The young man was as good as his word. In precisely fifteen minutes he drew down the reeking horse at the post-office door.

"Wait here for me," said Keene; "I may want you again."

"All right, sir."

Keene sprang down to the sidewalk and dashed up the steps. It was precisely forty minutes since he had left by the same door, and fell to watching Nell Harvey from the window of the opposite house.

As he entered the office Keene saw a young man, instead of the person he had hoped, was in the money-order cage. Hastening to the window he demanded hurriedly:

"Where is Miss Harvey?"

The clerk, of course, had no suspicion of what had occurred.

"She stepped out a while ago, sir; but only to do an errand," he replied.

"How long ago?"

"Possibly half an hour."

"See if she has taken any orders from the book in use."

"Good heavens, sir! You don't suspect——"

"Do what I tell you," Keene sharply interrupted.

The clerk excitedly obeyed.

"Yes," he presently cried; "she has filled out four orders."

"Are you sure?"

"Positively! There has been no person at this window this morning, sir; but there are four orders missing under to-day's date."

"Wire at once to the offices on which the orders are drawn," commanded Keene. "See if the rubber office stamp is here?"

"No, sir; that also is missing."

"And you'll find that the girl is missing, too," cried Keene bluntly. "Notify Oliver the moment he returns."

Without waiting to learn more, he hurriedly left the office and rejoined the young man in the waiting vehicle.

"Take me to Elm Street, number seventy-one," he commanded; "and don't spare your horse."

"The horse can stand it, sir."

"Do you know the street?"

"Very well, sir."

It was a drive of less than ten minutes, and the moment they arrived at the house Keene sprang down and rang the doorbell.

Johnny Guile was there, still made up as Nell Harvey, and was in his room securing from his trunk such articles as he wished to carry away with him.

But this clever swindler was always on the alert. The moment he heard the wheels outside, he suspected something wrong. Darting into the front chamber he looked down and saw Sheridan Keene as he left the carriage.

Most men would have taken a chance of escape by the back window—but not Johnny Guile. His daring was superb and his audacity was magnificent.

Though he turned slightly pale, there was an ugly look in his eyes; and without a moment's hesitation he ran back to his room, and began stripping off his dress.

At the same moment the ring of the doorbell sounded through the house.

It was answered by the landlady, a slender little woman of good reputation, and whose name was Cabot.

"Is Miss Harvey here in the house, madam?" Keene at once demanded.

To his great surprise and satisfaction, Mrs. Cabot replied:

"Yes, sir, she is in her room. This is an unusually early hour——"

But Keene did not wait to hear her out. Turning quickly to his friend in the buggy, he cried sharply:

"Come down here, young man! Run out back there and watch the rear chamber windows. If you see any one leaving by them, sing out to me at once."

The youth nodded understandingly, and started for the back yard.

"What's amiss, sir?" cried Mrs. Cabot. "I hope Miss Harvey has not done anything wrong."

"Oh, no, not a thing!" Keene dryly exclaimed, as he entered the hall and closed the front door. "Go up to her room and tell her she's wanted down here."

"But, sir——"

"Or, better still, I'll go myself!"

And the detective started up the stairs, three at a time.

But only to run almost into the arms of Miss Harvey, who at that moment was descending to meet him.

Now, however, Miss Harvey had changed her dress. She was in a loose, negligee wrapper, and her luxuriant auburn hair was hanging down her back. From below the edge of her skirts, peeped a tolerably well-shaped foot, without even a stocking to cover its nakedness.

"Oh, dear me, Mr. Keene!" she exclaimed, looking down at him with an indescribable smile of mingled surprise and amusement. "How you startled me! Is it indeed you?"

Keene drew back down the stairs, laughing with grim satisfaction.

"Yes, it is I, Miss Harvey!" he returned, with a curt display of enjoyment not easily suppressed. "Come down here!"

"But really, sir, I am not fit to be seen!"

"Don't let that embarrass you, my clever young lady. I have seen women in wrappers before. Come down here, I say "

"Why, certainly, if you insist," she smiled archly, as she came part way down the stairs. "Did you get my letter, Mr. Keene?"

"Yes, I got it."

"Wasn't it nice?"

"Very," returned Keene, with his eyes never leaving her, for he remembered her threat. "Come down here, all the way."

"Please don't be hard on me, Mr. Keene," she now pleaded, with an indescribable air of timidity and subservience. "I really don't think you are as soft as I said, now that you show up here again so quickly."

She had halted halfway down the stairs, and there stood holding her wrapper about her, as if undecided whether to obey him or not.

But Keene felt that he had her dead to rights, and the demure cleverness of the girl was pleasing him, and he was not inclined to be needlessly severe.

"I don't intend to be hard on you," he replied, "but you must go with me."

"I suppose the game is up, isn't it?"

"Very much up, young lady."

"Am I under arrest?"

"Nothing less."

Miss Harvey began to cry.

"Come, come," said Keene; "I have no time to waste. You may do your crying on the way, but you must go along with me."

"I—I suppose I may dress my—myself first, mayn't I?" she sobbed, as if scarce able to enunciate the very natural request.

"Yes, you may dress yourself," said Keene curtly.

"Here, woman!" he added sharply. "Go up to that girl's room with her, and remain there while she is dressing. Don't lose sight of her for a moment, and if she attempts any dodge, call to me at once."

"What—what d-d-dodge can I now attempt," sobbed Miss Harvey, in copious tears behind her handkerchief.

"Suicide, like enough!" exclaimed Keene bluntly. "Get up there, both of you, and don't keep me waiting longer than necessary."

"Really, sir," began Mrs. Cabot.

"Don't wait to argue with me," Keene sharply interrupted. "Do what I command. And see that you don't lose sight of the girl, or worse luck will be yours."

Though in some perturbation, and evidently more or less alarmed, Mrs. Cabot now proceeded to follow the detective's instructions. She started up the stairs, Miss Harvey leading the way, and Keene presently heard the chamber door close behind them.

Then he sat down on the stairs and waited.

When compared with his disappointment on the train, the present situation was eminently satisfactory.

That Miss Harvey, clever though as she might be, could now escape him, appeared utterly absurd.

For about ten minutes the detective patiently waited. He knew by the experience the length of time it requires a lady of style to dress.

At the end of ten minutes he heard a chamber door open, and then a young man in a checked suit called down over the baluster rail:

"Miss Harvey says you may come up to her room, sir," he said, in tones which indicated an affection for the girl, and none for the detective.

"Tell her to come down here," Keene sharply answered, rising to his feet.

"She cannot close her portmanteau."

"Why don't you close it for her?"

"I am not working this week—at least not for you and against her."

And with that the young man turned and, opening a doorway, disappeared within.

If he supposed for one instant that his new make-up had deceived Detective Keene, he was woefully mistaken. Sheridan Keene had recognized this dandified young man at once as none other than Nell Harvey.

But that brief glance also told Keene that the young man was a man in reality and not a woman in disguise.

With every detective instinct in him aroused, he dashed up the stairs. The entrance to Nell Harvey's room was at the other end of the hall, and as he reached it he strode into the room.

At that instant the door was shut behind him violently

The young man had concealed himself in a closet directly opposite, and, rushing out as Keene entered the room, he dashed by, giving the door a swing as he passed it, and flew down stairs at the top of his speed.

Quick as a flash, he tore open the front door. Keene was at the head of the stairs now. The detective sprang down in two bounds, but the door was shut in his face.

The young man leaped over the gate at a single bound, sprang into the deserted vehicle, and was away before Keene could reach him. He had not a second to spare, as Keene was within twenty feet of him when the horse dashed out of reach.

There was no use shooting at him, as the back of the buggy hid him from view.

The young man in the checked suit looked back and saw him. Then he leaned out from the swaying buggy, cheerfully waving his hand to the enraged detective, and shouted loudly:

"Ta, ta, my dear Mr. Keene! You must rise earlier in the morning if you really mean to turn down Johnny Guile!"

Then the departing team was lost in a cloud of dust a hundred yards down the road.

Keene turned briefly back into the house, and returned to the chamber he had entered a few moments before.

Scattered about upon the bed and chairs in disordered array, lay all of Nellie Harvey's discarded garments, and upon the chiffonier her splendid auburn wig.

Upon the floor behind the bed was stretched the helpless figure of affrighted Mrs. Cabot, tied hand and foot, and with the casing from one of the pillows bound securely over her mouth.

TO BE CONTINUED.

THE DEATH WARNING.

By J. R. C.

I am not superstitious; indeed, I never was—and yet, events have occurred under my own observation which go far to show that a certain course through life is marked out for each one of us, and that invisible beings are, sometimes, permitted to hold communication with mortals. The following is one of these:

In the company to which I belonged, and which formed part of Gordon's Brigade, was a young man, who, owing to his remarkably good conduct and attention to duty, was soon raised to the rank of first duty sergeant.

His father had been dead some years, and his mother, old and infirm, had been left in the care of a daughter, who, perhaps, found it difficult to provide for her own little wants.

James Walters did not forget this; he often spoke in affectionate terms of his only parent, and denied himself many unnecessary indulgences in order that the portion of his pay which he determined to send periodically to her might be as acceptable as possible.

At the time of which I speak he had a sum of seventy dollars, which was to be devoted to this purpose, and he delayed sending it by the uncertain mail, in order to avail himself of an opportunity offered by a recruiting party, which was about to return to his native city in a few days.

Man, however, is not always allowed to act as he chooses.

The men for the recruiting party were detailed, and the day of departure arrived. Walters, after picking out one in whom he could place the fullest confidence, invited him to his tent that he might place the money in his hands and give him the necessary instructions as to its delivery. But, lo! upon examination the wallet which contained the bills was, indeed, there, but the bills themselves were missing.

The unfortunate sergeant searched his pockets, and around his bunk a dozen times, but all in vain—the money was nowhere to be found. The bills were, evidently, stolen; and as the thief was not likely to keep them about his person, nothing could, at that time, be done toward their recovery.

Although the young man said little, it could be seen that he felt the loss severely; and indeed the majority of the company, knowing his history, pitied him from their hearts.

It was immediately after pay day; the sympathizers held a council among themselves, and half an hour afterward seventy dollars were placed in the young sergeant's hand as a token of their respect and attachment.

Months passed away; Sergeant Walters received a commission in the regular army, with orders to report at General Sykes' headquarters, without loss of time.

* * * * * * * *

The eighth of August had arrived, and all the necessary preparations were made for the battle which was to take place on the following day. It was evening; the glorious sun was sinking to rest behind the western hills, and most of our men were reclining upon the soft grass, some conversing of home and friends, some giving their opinion of the issue of the impending conflict, while others, wearied by exertion, had forgotten the glory and misery of war in light, yet refreshing, slumbers.

Suddenly one of the latter sprang to his feet with horror depicted in every feature of his countenance, and looked wildly around. We were all much surprised by this strange act, and the question, "What is the matter?" was repeated by every tongue.

The man did not answer, but leaning against a tree, he seemed endeavoring to regain his self-possession. After spending a few moments thus, he came toward us with an unsteady step, and said, in accents rendered tremulous by emotion:

"Boys, I have had a dream, or rather vision, which is too fearful to describe. I thought to-morrow had dawned, and that a dreadful battle had commenced. Never did I see so much blood spilled before. The Confederate shot and shell mowed down the ranks of our brave fellows at every discharge, and our own gallant brigade was cut up almost to a man. I myself fell among the rest, and to-morrow my body shall be numbered among the slain."

Some listened with a seriousness almost akin to awe to this strange recital, while others indulged, at the end, in a loud peal of laughter. But this outburst of merriment had little effect upon the mind of the narrator. He repeated, once more, that that would be his last night upon the earth, and then hurriedly sought the captain of the company. His business with this officer shall be disclosed by and by.

Morning came at last; it was the ninth day of August;

and as the red rays of the sun gilded the eastern hills we were accoutered and "preparing for the fray."

The battle commenced. The roaring of cannon and the cracking of musketry was heard on every side, still our brigade, posted in the outskirts of a wood, was comparatively safe from the fire of the enemy.

But, ah! what is that? Yonder battery has, at last, succeeded in getting our range, and its shells are fast dealing destruction among us. It must be silenced at any cost. Hark! the word "Forward!" is given; each man grasps his piece firmly with both hands; we enter the open field in front, and the memorable charge of Cedar Mountain is commenced.

The battery was, indeed, silenced, but our loss was truly fearful. Fully three-fourths of the brave fellows who formed that luckless brigade sank to rise no more. And yet, the dreamer—he who predicted his own death—was still alive, sound, and unhurt.

When we were rallying, he happened to be by my side, and I could not help deriding him upon the foolishness of his prophecy. Casting upon me a look of melancholy, mingled with reproach, he replied:

"The sun is not yet sunk to rest."

As he spoke, the branch of a tree caught my toe and pitched me, headlong, to the ground; a Confederate shell struck the earth, about twenty paces in front of us, at the same moment, and burst instantly.

When I recovered from the double shock and looked around, I saw the headless trunk of my companion lying by my side. His skull had been blown into a thousand fragments.

The following morning, at reveille, the captain addressed us thus:

"Soldiers, Henry ——, who fell yesterday, came to me on the eve of that bloody battle, and said: 'I shall die to-morrow. I am forewarned. A little money is due to me; have it sent, I beseech you, to Lieutenant Walters, or his mother, for it was I who stole the seventy dollars that were intended for her.' Comment is unnecessary," added the captain; "you all know the story; therefore, let me hope that the moral which it teaches will not be lost."

AN EXCOMMUNICATED HINDU.

One of the greatest calamities which can befall a Hindu is when he accidentally kills a cow. Such a misfortune has befallen a man of the Ahir or cow-herd caste at Fyzabad. It appears that he was carrying a young calf on his shoulders, which, having fallen down, broke its neck and died. The Brahmans sentenced him to the severest form of Hindu excommunication, called hatia, for six months. They further told the Ahir that he could not have committed a greater sin. During the period of excommunication the Ahir was ordered to lead a life of mendicancy, and with a rope round his neck and a portion of the calf's tail on his shoulders he was to perform pilgrimage to different Hindu shrines. The members of his family were forbidden to supply him with either shelter or food. The Ahir has returned to his village, but, until the purification ceremonies are over, he must live in a temporary grass-thatched house. It now remains for a man of the Badmanus caste, which is one of the lowest and most degraded, to purify him. A barber, after shaving the delinquent, and paring the nails of his hands, will make over the hair and nails to the Badmanus, who will burn them and also set fire to the hut. After this, the Ahir will take a plunge into the River Sarju and come out purified. But his troubles are yet by no means at an end. After he has feasted fifty Brahmans and one hundred of his brethren, he will be readmitted into caste fellowship.

DROVE OFF A TIGER WITH A STICK.

A surveyor on the east coast of Sumatra happened to be busy taking bearings through a telescope on a water parting in the mountains there, when suddenly the beast of prey stood right in front of the instrument. A coolie, holding another instrument, rolled, from pure terror, head over heels into a neighboring ravine, and the other helpers fled, so that the surveyor was forced to face his foe alone. Unarmed as he was, and at a loss what to do, he seized his walking stick and mechanically struck at the tiger, when, to his relief, the animal suddenly turned tail and disappeared in the jungle. On the west coast of Sumatra, on the road from Korinchi to the coast, tigers are said to have killed last year sixteen travelers. For a while they even stopped the conveyance of coffee from the interior. The natives, it is added, dare not attack the tigers from superstitious motives. Once, when one of them was carried away out of an armed party, his companions "asked the tiger for mercy," and made no attempt to rescue. The Dutch government, finding this superstitious dread so strong, has been compelled to content itself with building lofty and tigerproof night shelters for travelers on the road.

SEVERE PENANCE.

A waiter in a hotel was recently asked by a gentleman staying in the house whether he would like to earn ten dollars. The waiter was only too willing, and was accordingly invited to enter the bedroom of the gentleman. There he was given a new whip, and requested to administer a severe thrashing to the visitor.

The waiter remonstrated, but the gentleman soon silenced his scruples by handing him ten dollars, and by mutely presenting his bare back for the blows, having stripped down to the waist. The waiter thrashed away until his arms gave out, and then the willing victim expressed his warm thanks.

"This is the anniversary of the death of my little son," said the gentleman, as he painfully put on his shirt over his lacerated shoulders. "I gave him an inhuman thrashing for some minor fault, and the poor child died of the shock. That was six years ago. Each year as the day of my great sorrow comes around, I employ somebody to thrash me by way of appeasing the pangs of my memory. I shall keep up the practice as long as I live."

SENSE OF TOUCH.

Between the shoulder blades, over the region of the spine, the skin is almost insensible to touch. The edges of the eyelids display great sensibility, owing to which they close at the slightest touch, thus protecting the organs they cover. Where the skin is stretched, as over the knee or elbow, the sense of touch is slight; but on the palmar surfaces of the hands, feet, or fingers, it is most delicate. The tip of the tongue is capable of distinguishing the two points of a pair of compasses when only .0394 inch apart.

THE NEWS OF ALL NATIONS.

Great Interest in Tennis.

With eight countries competing for the Davis Cup, emblemized in the world's lawn tennis championship, there can be no further question as to the international status of tennis. The game, whether played upon grass or clay courts, is gaining steadily in popularity in all parts of the world.

Some idea of the hold that tennis has secured upon the amateur sportsmen in distant parts of the globe can be gathered from the fact that during the international play between the All-British and Australasian teams in Australia and New Zealand last winter, the net profits of the matches, derived from gate receipts and program sales, amounted to $20,000.

This sum was divided equally between the two tennis associations of the competing countries, and has proved a source of considerable friction so far as the Antipodean authorities are concerned. It was the original intention of the Australasian Association to retain its share of the fund to finance future international matches both at home and abroad. Several of the associate bodies have lodged a protest, claiming that the receipts should be divided equally among the members of the national body.

From Singapore comes a tale of difficulties of an entirely different type. It concerns the running off of the annual championship. Owing to the extreme heat experienced it is possible to play tenins only between the hours of 5 and 6:15 p. m. This seventy-five-minute period exists from shortly before sundown until twilight prevents further play.

The game is extremely popular, and there are a large number of excellent players in the Straits Settlement district. Last season close to 600 racket wielders entered the title tournament. With a field of this size it required more than five weeks of daily play to decide the championship in singles and doubles. An even larger entry is promised this year, and the play is likely to extend over a period of six or seven weeks.

Racer's Headgear Fatal.

H. C. Warner, of New York, a motor-cycle racer, blinded by a loose headgear, shot off the track at the Motordrome, at Pittsburgh, Pa., recently, and was killed, his skull being fractured. He was 25 years old, and was the racing partner of Arthur Chappelle, world's champion motor cyclist.

Education Valued at $25,000.

According to statistics compiled by the administration office of Northwestern University, and made public recently, a college education is valued at $25,000.

In seeking to prove in dollars and cents the value of higher education, the university took a census of the class of 1903, members of which have had ten years in which to get "settled." This showed that for the first five years out of school the average earning power of the alumni was $867, and for the next five years this jumped to $1,862.

According to the United States census bureau, the average earning capacity of the salaried man in Chicago was $1,202. An estimate of the total value of a college education was arrived at by finding the difference between the earnings of the graduate and report of the government census and multiply the sum by 40, which the statistician considered a fair estimate of a man's years of service.

The cost of a college education at Northwestern is estimated at $2,400.

"Conscience Fund" Slump.

Uncle Sam's "conscience fund" received in the twelve months ended June 30 last only $2,874.44, the lowest amount for any one year since 1901, and compared with a hundred-year average of $4,200.

In the last 100 years the government has received conscience contributions aggregating $434,615.69. The fund was established in President Madison's administration, in 1811, when the first contribution of $5 was received. The largest amount ever received in one year was $35,868, in 1902, and the greatest individual contribution, $18,669.60, was made to the collector of customs in New York more than a decade ago by an unknown.

Long Throw by McGrath.

Matt McGrath, of the Irish-American A. C., New York, threw the 16-pound hammer 188 feet 7 inches at the revival of the Tailtin Irish games recently, breaking his own world's record of 187 feet 4 inches. The long heave will not stand as a record, however, as it was not measured with a steel tape. McGrath's throw was made as an exhibition toss, the I.-A. A. C. star not competing in the games. He was the only one of the New York athletes who was prominent in the games at Grant Park, to appear on the field.

Faces a Terrible Death Five Hours.

John Vovolik, 16 years old, is alive and well after having faced death in terrible form for five hours.

He was held fast by a tide gate in the West River, at New Haven, Conn., between 7 and 12 o'clock at night, and for several minutes during that period was completely submerged, the water being inches over his head.

He breathed through a rubber tube which was given to him when it was seen that the rising tide would cover him. A priest administered to him the last rites of the church. Three thousand persons who had heard of his plight and thronged the shore gave him up for dead as they saw him disappear.

But by keeping his senses about him and using the four-foot length of tube, Vovolik managed to survive and finally to escape from his predicament practically uninjured.

He was swimming with some other boys toward dusk, when, growing tired, he sunk to the concrete wall which edges the river, to rest. Unwittingly he hung just at the opening of one of the tide gates. These are huge wooden-hinged affairs, with their openings pointed upstream, which are closed automatically by the rising tide to prevent the high water from overflowing the meadow land adjoining the river.

The upcoming tide kept closing the gate over which

Vovolik was clinging, and when he attempted to swim away he found that his leg was caught by the gate.

He called to his companions, and they tried, both from the land and the water, to drag him out, but they could not budge him. Then they telephoned for the police and firemen, who came in a hurry, but were of little aid.

A wrecking crew of a trolley company then came with a jack and managed to break off one of the six tide gates, which let water flow out on the meadows and caused a slight drop of the surface. The water at this time was near the boy's mouth.

The river continued to rise despite the outlet. When it was seen that the boy soon would be submerged a doctor got the rubber tube for him to breathe through, and the priest came around to administer to him spiritually.

The trolley wreckers hurried back to town and rigged up a larger and more powerful jack. With this—while the river was flowing over young Vovolik, they forced the gate which held him and freed his leg.

Then he was hauled to the surface while the great crowd of spectators cheered. After two doctors worked over him for a short while he was able to go home.

"After I was caught in the tide gate," said Vovolik, "I thought it would be easy enough to get out with the other boys' help, but as time went on and they couldn't get me free, I became frightened.

"Then they had to hold up my head so I could breathe and I became scared. But what every one was doing didn't seem to do any good, and the water kept rising. I didn't think they could get me free, so I sent for a priest. I thought I was going to die. Then Father Laflin came.

"The water kept rising, and they had to keep holding up my head. Father Laflin came out on the spiles and gave me the last rites of the church. Then I didn't care whether they held up my head any longer or not. I was tired and cold. I was tired of everything except Father Laflin, who stayed out on the spiles near the gate. Then I seemed to go to sleep, and the next I knew I was home."

"Idaho" Wins Prize for Marksmanship.

The marksmanship trophy in the navy this year goes to the battleship *Idaho*, whose record tops the whole list of 21 vessels competing in the battleship class. Secretary Daniels has written a letter of commendation to Captain W. B. Howard, who commands the *Idaho*, congratulating him on the success of his ship. Congratulatory letters will also be sent to Lieutenant Commanders Allen M. Cook, John S. Graham, and Charles P. Huff, who, in the opinion of Captain Howard, contributed greatly to the successful gunnery record of the *Idaho*.

Famous Police Captain Dead.

Ex-Captain James K. Price, one of the best-known of the old type of policemen, and one of the original Byrnes detectives, died at his home, 1646 Mount Hope Avenue, the Bronx, N. Y., recently, as the result of an apoplectic stroke which he had suffered last January. He was 66 years old. His wife and seven children and many relatives, including his brother, Police Captain Samuel Price, were at his bedside when the end came. For seventy-nine hours he lay in a state of coma. Then he asked for his wife and children, although he could not see them, his sight being paralyzed. After bidding them farewell he lapsed again into unconsciousness and died.

Ex-Captain Price was stricken while attending a reception in honor of the Masonic Veterans at the Hotel Astor. He was taken to the Polyclinic Hospital in a critical condition.

Even before he entered the New York police department in 1874, Price had had a picturesque history. He had been an artilleryman in the regular United States army, and had seen service in all parts of the country, notably in Arizona among the Apache Indians. Once he worked as a boilermaker. He enlisted in the army at the age of 19 years, and was assigned to Company H, Second United States Artillery. When, in 1867, the Russian government sold Alaska to the United States for $7,200,000, Company H was ordered to Alaska to take possession of the country. While there he learned to speak Russian fluently, and picked up as well an easy knowledge of most of the Alaskan Indian dialects. Subsequently, when he entered the New York police department, he was fond of showing his fluent command of Russian whenever occasion offered, and lesser linguists among the men of the force were found baffled by that multiconsonantal tongue.

Price was conspicuous for his service under Inspector Alexander Williams and other old-time police commanders, and earned a special reputation by his efficient work in quelling the violent street-car strike riots of years ago. In carrying out his duty in such riot emergency he was a stanch, as well as a sturdy, believer in the efficacy of the policeman's club, and wielded it joyously and with telling effect. He was known also for his record service in handling parade or holiday crowds on various occasions.

Many good stories are remembered about Price by old members of the police force. On one occasion, while he was still a very young patrolman, walking a beat in Hell's Kitchen, he saw a man with all the earmarks and tokens of a perfectly successful burglar emerge one night from a house with a bundle of loot on his shoulder. The burglar dropped his loot and ran. Price gave chase. Just as the fugitive dodged around the plate-glass angle of a corner saloon Price whipped out his revolver and fired. The bullet went through both windows of the glass angle and lodged in the runaway burglar, bringing him to terms and the sidewalk. The burglar was removed to the hospital, and the next day Price received a summons to appear before the then Commissioner Joel B. Erhardt.

The commissioner was harsh and forbidding, and Price went down to him fully expecting to be broke.

"So you shot a man last night?" gruffly began the commissioner.

Price started with an apologetic air to explain the necessity he had been under to shoot.

"Did you kill him?" asked Erhardt.

"No."

"Well, if you didn't kill him and only got him, I'll make you a roundsman," grumbled the commissioner.

Price almost fell over. Then recovering himself quickly, he exclaimed:

"If you'll make it a sergeant, commissioner, I'll go back to the hospital and finish him."

Ultimately he was made a sergeant even without finishing the convalescent burglar. In 1892 he was made a captain.

The old-timers tell another story about him, of a time when a desperate criminal went through the Tenderloin swearing he would shoot "Jim" Price on sight. Captain Price met the dead-shot desperado on Sixth Avenue, glared

at him, and took possession of the fire-snorting dragon, now innocuous and trembling like a baby lamb.

On July 31, 1902, Captain Price, then in command of the Eldridge Street police station, surprised Commissioner Partridge, of the police department, by applying for retirement as a captain on half pay ($1,375 a year). He had been in command of the Eldridge Street station only a short time, and that station was then one of the storm centers of the department.

"I am more than fifty-five years old," explained Price, "and now I am not able to do the work to which I have been assigned; so I have decided to quit and let the younger fellows have a chance. I have been in the department twenty-eight years, and have tried to do the right thing all the time, and now that I have only a few years left I want a chance to end my days quietly with my family. My pension, on which I shall live, is about all I have to depend on."

Nevertheless, it was the belief of his friends that Price, always a thrifty and saving man in the many years of his service in the police department, had managed, by means of investments in a small way here and there, to acquire very considerable holdings of real estate in the Tremont section of the Bronx. Since his retirement from the police force he attended chiefly to his real-estate business there.

It was Price's commander, Inspector "Aleck" Williams, who first gave the Tenderloin its name. Williams had been assigned to the West Thirtieth Street station after years of service in unprofitable districts.

"I have been having chuck steak ever since I've been on the force," said Williams. "Now I'm going to have a bit of tenderloin."

That was in 1876. Within a few years Tenderloin came to have a definite geographical and sociological meaning in police circles throughout the country.

When the Lexow investigation began to turn the light on Williams' administration of the "Tenderloin," Max Schmittberger, associated with Price under Williams, began to draw much fire. So did Price. Schmittberger was placed on the witness stand and gave much information about the police administration. Price, true to the traditions that made the police department a closed corporation, remained loyal to his superior and master of his mouth. Later Williams, in speaking about those times and the Reverend Doctor Parkhurst's part in the investigation, said of Price:

"Jim Price has sent more men to prison than Parkhurst has to heaven."

He added that Price had made a better record in the Tenderloin than any forty Byrnes' men had at headquarters.

Captain Price, as his friends continued to call him long after he retired from the police force, was one of the first men picked out by Inspector Thomas Byrnes when the latter, just after the famous Manhattan Bank robbery, formed the detective bureau. He received many testimonials and medals for bravery while in the service. He was once shot in the head by a negro burglar, but after a desperate fight succeeded in landing his assailant as a prisoner in the West Thirtieth Street station.

Eluding Guards, Leaps into Sea.

A naval prisoner from Port Royal, brought to Boston recently late at night on the steamship *City of Memphis* from Savannah, Ga., broke from his guards and leaped into the harbor before the ship reached her dock. Searchlights from the revenue cutter *Gresham*, lying near by, and from an incoming excursion boat failed to disclose the man, though the marine guard fired one volley at what they thought was a head bobbing in the water.

Too Many Jack Rabbits.

J. T. Hoops, a farmer, residing near Holdman, Ore., arrived in Pendleton recently and telegraphed an appeal to Washington for government aid in fighting jack rabbits that have infested the central part of Umatilla County, and are doing serious damage to growing wheat and rye.

Owing to the State bounty on coyotes, they have been practically exterminated, and with the disappearance of their natural enemies the jack rabbits have multiplied in serious proportions. Poisoning, trapping, shooting, dogs, and all other methods of attacking these pests have had little effect. Hoops claims that in one instance a section of grain land 15 miles long and 12 miles wide has been eaten clean by the rabbits.

Hoops will urge the government to send agents here to inoculate captive rabbits with the bacilli of a disease fatal to these rodents, known as "rabbit distemper," with the expectation that those inoculated when turned loose will infect all others that they come in contact with.

Will Train Students at Camp Gettysburg.

The war department camp at Gettysburg has opened with about 200 students from colleges and universities east of the Rockies enrolled for the course in special military instruction.

The department proposes through this camp and another in California to found the nucleus of a body of trained men of high intelligence, who would be easily available in case of war. The camp is in charge of Major James H. McRae.

"Red" Donohue is Dying.

Frank ("Red") Donohue, one-time pitcher of the Phillies, St. Louis Nationals, and later Cleveland and Detroit Clubs, of the American League, is slowly dying at his home in Philadelphia of tuberculosis.

In the early '90s the Phillies obtained Donohue from St. Louis by giving Jack Taylor, Jack Clements, and Lave Cross for him.

"Cheekiest" Stowaway.

The "cheekiest" stowaway that ever fell into the hands of the Ellis Island government authorities is Joseph Gronberg, a young man with a studious air and the easy, cosmopolitan air of a traveler, who admits he came to America as a first-class passenger on a palatial liner without paying a cent for his passage.

He just walked aboard the steamship *France*, made himself at home and agreeable to all, as he was able to do with the six languages that he spoke, and received every attention. But he dodged stewards and pursers at such times as his ticket was likely to be called for, and managed to slip into vacant staterooms for his lodging.

When the steamer reached New York, a thunderstorm aided in his escape, for a bolt struck the steamer, and, in the excitement, Gronberg walked off without detection. In spite of all his accomplishments, however, he was deficient in logic, for he later went to Ellis Island to seek a position as linguist.

In the quizzing he was subjected to, there an official

recognized him as the fellow who had been taken as a stowaway from another large steamer last winter, and then he confessed to his latest exploit. He will probably be deported.

Baseball Percentage.

The Brooklyns dropped below the Pittsburghs recently. The figures proved it. The Pirates were in fourth place and the Brooklyns in the second division by an infinitesimal margin; but still they were there.

Each had a percentage of .493 carrying the decimals into small figures; but carrying them into six and the percentages are: Pittsburg, .493333; Brooklyn, .492958. Therefore the Pirates lead by .000375 of a point.

The delicate difference would be enough to decide a pennant if necessary.

Here's a New Iron Man.

In Pitcher Schwenk, Saginaw has the real "iron man" of the Southern Michigan League.

Schwenk recently chalked up a record of four full games on four consecutive days. In the four games he allowed twenty-one hits for seven runs and struck out thirty-three men.

To Popularize Bathing.

"The bureau of public health and hygiene, of New York, is attempting," said John A. Kingsbury, of New York, to the National Conference of Charities and Corrections, "through advertising and in other ways to popularize bathing. It is hoped that this will be eventually a positive health factor."

Jack Johnson Won't Return.

Jack Johnson, the colored pugilist, arrived in France recently on board the *Corinthian*, and immediately on landing announced his determination never to return to the United States. He said he would in future take up his residence in Paris.

Johnson is under sentence in Chicago of one year for violating the Mann law. Released on $15,000 bail pending appeal, he fled the country.

Matty Writing a Play.

Christy Mathewson, the Giants' star twirler, is writing a play to be staged at a Broadway theater this fall. It is to be called "Fair Play," and baseball is the theme.

This is the report fans heard when the announcement was made that Mathewson, collaborating with Mrs. Rida Johnson Young, author of "Brown at Harvard," was working on the plot. The hero will be a young American ball player.

Has Starry Banner.

The Smithsonian Institution has announced that the original Star-spangled Banner was in the possession of the Smithsonian and had been placed on exhibition in the national museum. This flag floated over Fort McHenry on September 13 and 14, 1814, when the British fleet, under Admiral Cockburn, attacked Baltimore. It is 27 feet 6 inches wide by 32 feet 10 inches long, and has fifteen stripes and fifteen stars.

The flag that was the inspiration for the famous patriotic song is much faded and torn, but the colors are "still there." It is one of the few flags having fifteen stripes and the same number of stars, as it was made before the standardization of the American colors. The flag was kept by Colonel George Armistead, who was in command at Fort McHenry, and it was handed down to his grandson, Even Appleton, of New York, who loaned it to the Smithsonian and finally gave it to the institution.

Mule-footed Pigs.

A year ago residents of New Canaan, Conn., made pilgrimages to Peter Chick's farm to see a "two-faced pig," which proved to be a hoax.

Now they are going to A. L. Benedict's place to look at a litter of pigs, several of which have mule hoofs—no hoax this time, according to Justice of the Peace F. S. Dawless, who says he is ready to make affidavit to it.

The late Doctor P. H. Bliss, the eminent New York bacteriologist, found in Ohio and brought to his summer place at New Canaan, a mule-footed hog, which is now owned by Edwin Bouton, superintendent of the town poor farm.

It is the sire of two litters of pigs, half of them mule-hoofed or club-footed. One of these litters can be seen at the country home of A. V. Barnes.

These mule-footed pigs are said to be immune from hog cholera, but the only basis for this claim seems to be the quip that the mule in them kicks out all the cholera germs.

The Champion Big Tree.

All previous records of big trees discovered in Washington and Oregon forests have been eclipsed by the latest find in Snohomish County, Wash., near the city of Everett. The giant tree is a yellow fir. This tree must be aged, for there are many tree stumps near by that have from 100 to 500 rings, each said to represent a year's growth. The new-found monarch of the northwestern forest is 65 feet in circumference at the butt, and it is 128 feet to the first limb, which measures 109 inches in circumference. The estimated height of this big fir is 300 feet.

Grains and Grass Used by Artist.

Mrs. M. J. Wessels, of Hillyard, Wash., has been commissioned to prepare scenery and figures, with grains, grasses, and plants, to decorate the ceilings and walls of the State buildings at the Panama Exposition. She did notable work at those in Chicago, St. Louis, Portland, and Jamestown.

With grains of wheat she has depicted the battle of Gettysburg in every detail in the archway of the Great Northern depot at Spokane. The soldiers, cannon, smoke, trees, are all kernels of wheat, selected for their colors and laid with great care and patience in a bed of glue.

Mrs. Wessels can take an armful of ripening grain, and in a few hours have a forest scene, with a waterfall in the center, worked out in every detail, even to clouds and birds.

Brief Sporting Notes.

Heine Zimmerman, the heavy-hitting third baseman of the Chicago Cubs, has just passed through the most trying experience of his career. Heine is a big, good-natured fellow, but he can't get along amicably with umpires, and has been fined and "chased" so much this season that his usefulness has been considerably impaired. Two weeks ago a Chicago admirer offered to give Zimmerman $100 if he would for fourteen days avoid being put out of the game

by the umpire. Zimmerman tried manfully, had a number of close calls, but succeeded in winning the "century."

Larry Lajoie, of the Cleveland Naps, has left a batting mark that nobody will reach. His hitting average for eighteen years in baseball is .355, a mark that all the other good batters, such as Ty Cobb and Joe Jackson, can shoot at to their hearts' content.

Clyde Milan, of the Senators, the Washington American League team, has stolen twice as many bases as has "Hi" Myers, of the Boston Braves, who leads the National League base thieves.

The big contest in Washington just now is to see whether Walter Johnson can win more games than all the rest of the Senator pitchers put together.

One of the unique records of the season goes to Ens, the Providence, R. I., first baseman, who had only one put-out in a full nine-inning game.

Here are three grand old men of baseball: Hans Wagner, Pittsburgh shortstop, 39 years old; Eddie Plank, Philadelphia Athletics' pitcher, 38 years old; Christy Mathewson, New York Giants' pitcher, 33 years old. Mathewson and Plank have been in the game thirteen seasons, while Wagner has been on the diamond seventeen years.

Jake Daubert, Manager Bill Dahlen's star first sacker, has been doing much to keep the Brooklyn team in the first division. Jake is batting over the .300 mark and fielding in his usual sensational way.

Forty-four years ago the first professional ball team in the world, the famous Cincinnati Reds, who played the entire season of 1869 without losing a single game, had a pay roll of $9,500. This year Ty Cobb is getting $12,500 to play center field for Detroit.

Rich Quicksilver Find.

Excitement exists at Millers and at Mina, Nev., over the announcement that an important quicksilver strike has been made nine miles east of Mina. According to statements made by those who have been on the ground, there is apparently millions of tons of material in sight, and the result has caused a tremendous rush to the scene.

Tom Pepper, a cattleman, of Bishop, made the announcement of the strike. M. Keogh, of Reese River, and James Lathrop, a baggage man of the Tonopah & Goldfield Railroad, have had samples of the ore assayed in Goldfield. The results astonished them. The ore ran 12½ per cent in quicksilver, worth at that rate $200 per ton.

Sweating Stone True Forecaster.

The "sweating stone" on the farm of John Owens, near Columbus, Ind., never fails to give a correct forecast of rain. Seventy-five years ago a barn was built on the Owens farm, and one of the stones used in the foundation is what is known throughout that part of the country as the "sweating stone." Usually a day or two before a rain this stone begins to sweat. Moisture oozes from it and trickles down the sides.

The other morning the stone began to sweat, and Owens called some of his neighbors and informed them that there would be rain within a short time. Rain came in the afternoon.

Auto Horn as Lure for Bugs.

Insect collecting will be an easy job hereafter if Raymond L. Ditmars, curator of the New York Zoölogical Park, is successful in a new scheme on which he is at work. Recently the curator told for the first time of his plan to use an automobile horn to catch katydids and crickets, locusts, and other things that make night's chorus, when on his vacation.

Sullivan County, N. Y., will be the scene of his experiments.

A set of small horns resembling megaphones are to be attached to the automobile. If all comes out as expected, the katydids will stop "katydidding" when they hear the melting, mellifluous sounds of the siren which has been devised to make them leave home at the first note they hear. Then they are expected to hop aboard the automobile, and in this dazed condition quickly be placed in captivity.

One Thousand Six Hundred and Forty-eight Vessels Built.

There were 1,648 vessels, aggregating 302,304 gross tons, built in the United States during the fiscal year ended June 30, according to the department of commerce. This was the largest construction since 1908. Compared with the fiscal year 1911, although the number of vessels constructed was not so great, there was an increased tonnage of 138,512 tons. Of the 121 metal steam vessels constructed, thirty-six were built on the Great Lakes.

The closing month of the year saw constructed 178 sailing, steam, and unrigged vessels, with a tonnage of 36,729 tons. The largest ship built during the month was the *Congress*, at Camden, N. J.

News in the Country Papers.

The bride is a refined young lady of culture, as also is Mr. Smith, the groom.—*Mayville Booster.*

To keep ants away from the refrigerator, tie a woolen string around each leg saturated with turpentine.—*Corydon Republican.*

Single-barrel, breech-loading, 12-gauge gun. Splendid for rabbits. Will sell for cash or trade for an 80-pound shoat. Have more guns than we need is the reason for wanting to get rid of this one.—*Dietrich Gazette.*

The choir at the Presbyterian Church was full and the music was excellent.—*Blairstown Banner.*

A young man by the name of Clement fell from a street car yesterday evening and was quite severely stunned and bruised. The car kept on its way—evidently not knowing of the accident.—*Wausau Pilot.*

G. W. Shoener, the well-known undertaker, will this evening tender a banquet to the doctors of the town.—*Pottsville Republican.*

Measles are in the neighborhood at this place, but we hope there will not be an epidemic of them, as it is such a busy time to be sick.—*Scottsville Times.*

How Dick Rudolph Broke into Baseball.

Richard Rudolph, the new pitcher of the Boston Nationals, is of medium stature and throws and bats right-handed. Dick is only twenty-five years old.

There's an interesting story about the way Rudolph broke into professional baseball. As a youngster playing with the Morris High team, in New York City, he was a sensational twirler.

He went to Fordham College when he was a trifle over fourteen years old, and immediately was made the first-string pitcher. He was the sensation of the Fordham team in 1906, winning two shut-outs over Holy Cross, Fordham's closest baseball rival, at a time when the mighty

names of Barry, Carrigan, Hoey, and Flynn appeared on the Holy Cross batting order.

He also scored a win over Yale that year, and Fordham was ranked the best of the college teams.

Rudolph was first noticed by Ed Barrow, then president of the Toronto Club, when he let down Holy Cross in the late spring of 1906, in Worcester, with one hit. Barrow had gone to Worcester to look over Barry, Carrigan, and the other touted Holy Cross players.

He had little thought for Rudolph, but when the game was over he got a promise from Rudolph to report at the close of the college season to Toronto. Rudolph didn't do so much that year, and his first real season of work was in 1907, when he won fourteen and lost seven games.

Since then he has been with Toronto without a break, save in the fall of 1910 and in the early spring of 1911, when he was given a try-out by the New York Giants. In those six seasons that he pitched for Toronto he had an average of .642, which means that he won two out of every three games in which he started.

Mitchell, the veteran catcher of the Braves, was with Toronto in 1907, and caught Rudolph, so that Dick is not without a friend on the Boston team. Tesreau went to the Giants along with Rudolph in the fall of 1910.

Both just barely dabbled in games. Rudolph appearing in two games, both against Boston, when one of them was won for the Giants and the other was easily tucked away as a Braves' victory.

Both went back to Toronto in 1911, and though Tesreau returned to the Giants at the close of the season, Rudolph's average for the season was better than that of the Ozark giant.

Queer Things Man Breathes.

It is impossible to go about, especially about the streets of a busy city, without breathing quantities of dust.

But dust is a word that really covers a wide range. It really means minute particles of anything whatever that can be stirred up sufficiently to float about in the air for ever so small a period. Consequently the dust you may breathe into your lungs while walking along a residential street in a city may be entirely different from the dust you breathe while walking through a big market district or manufacturing district.

Dust has been analyzed, and in a small quantity of it a most surprising variety of things found. On a fairly clean residential street the dust will generally be found to consist of iron from horse shoes and nails in men's shoes and from the tires of wagons, particles of leather, wool, cotton, feathers, linen, and such things from people's clothes, bits of wood, sand, paper, clay, and such things from the dirt that accumulates and is ground up fine in the street. There is also a small quantity of bacteria.

In a busy street, where there are many factories and much trucking, the quantity of metal particles in dust increases; also the quantity of horn and hoof, which are the same, from horses' feet, and fine rubber from auto truck tires, while the metals may include bits of copper, brass, tin, lead, steel, and even gold and silver, from the manufacturing plants, as bits of the metal fly out of the factories in the dust.

On a hot, dry day in the slums, where there is always a lot of garbage that lies about and dries, there are quantities of vegetable matter and, of course, more bacteria. But on a country road 100 miles from a big city and 10 miles or so from a town the dust is mostly bits of fine sand, particles of wood and leaves, and flowers and seeds. Very little metal is found in this dust, practically no paper or bits of rubber, and the per cent of bacteria is extremely low.

The dust is never alike in two streets, nor does it average alike in two cities. Pittsburgh dust contains great quantities of metal and also soot or charcoal. Scranton dust contains much carbon or coal. Lansing, Mich., dust contains a great deal of copper.

Chicago dust has a lot of fine particles of hair from the stockyards, and so on. Every city has dust peculiar to itself or to the leading industries in that city. Milwaukee has dust laden with flour and bits of wheat chaff; in St. Augustine the dust is loaded with fine particles of coral from the streets, which are paved with coral.

But while some particular thing predominates in dust, there is generally in every city a quantity of metals and woolens and paper and rubber and wood and such things in it. Just as soon as anything, from solid gold to a bit of dried banana skin, becomes ground up fine enough, it falls into the great family of minute particles known as dust.

Boy and Dog Save Bather.

Alfred Meyers, of Philadelphia, who has a cottage on Oriental Avenue, Atlantic City, N. J., went bathing off New Hampshire Avenue. When he turned to swim back to shore he was too exhausted to make headway, and yelled for help.

Dorio Leslie, seventeen, and his big St. Bernard, Spud, were playing on the beach. Boy and dog plunged to the rescue and reached the drowning man.

Leslie placed Meyers' hands on the dog's collar and helped support him on the way to shore. It was all boy and dog could do to keep Meyers from sinking, and all were swept down two blocks before they reached the beach. All were exhausted.

Eating Feats Kill "Ki Ko, Wild Man."

As the result of his unusual gastronomic feats, Joseph Masse, known in the Pawtucket Valley as "Ki Ko, the Wild Man," died at the Rhode Island Hospital recently. Death was due to hemorrhages of the stomach. Masse was a familiar character at shore resorts, where he gave exhibitions of eating large quantities of fish and raw meat.

One of his customs was to carry small snakes concealed in his long hair, and occasionally shake them out, to the consternation of spectators.

Liverpool Has Biggest Dock.

King George recently opened the Gladstone dry dock, in Liverpool, England. It is the largest in the world, and the only one at present able to accommodate 50,000-ton transatlantic liners. The Gladstone dock only marks the completion of the first stage in a scheme of dock extension by which Liverpool designs to retain its present place as the chief European port for gigantic ocean liners. The whole scheme will cost $20,000,000, and, when finished, will provide loading and berthing accommodations for five 50,000-ton liners.

The Gladstone dock cost a quarter of a million dollars. It is named not after the grand old man of English politics, but in recognition of the services done to Liverpool by Sir Robert Gladstone.

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